OP 327/42

REFERENCE LIBRARY OF
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
2 PARK STREET, BOSTON

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE SHELVES
EXCEPT BY PERMISSION OF
THE LIBRARIAN

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS.
Archive
Collection
This book may not be sent to the Offices
and if borrowed must be returned within 7 days

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025 with funding from
Boston Public Library

https://archive.org/details/englishpeopleove03tilb

THE ENGLISH PEOPLE OVERSEAS

VOLUME III

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA

1763-1867

BY

A. WYATT TILBY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
1916

Printed in Great Britain

PREFACE

WHAT is all the rubbish of the past, asked the great British Rájá of Saráwak, when compared with the promise of the future? What indeed, one may answer; it is no more than the days which man has lived when compared with his hope of immortality.

But not all the past is rubbish, else memory were a useless gift, and that longer memory which we call history a delusive toil. For if the old do well to remember the days of youth, when the blood rose hot through limbs now stricken with the palsied pains of age; it is good also to search a wider horizon than opens between our own short span of years, and to recall the deeds of our fathers.

For in truth their deeds were great and worthy of remembrance. They were the explorers of fresh paths, the pioneers of new lands, the founders of new nations. They subdued the wastes of the earth, and made them fertile; and we inherit the fruits of their toil.

Their bodies are spread throughout the world; their bones are scattered in the five continents and at the bottom of the seven seas. Some there were that returned to the mother-land, that now lie resting in hallowed ground, by village spire or in cathedral cloister; others are at peace in far-off lands, where the soil which God created has known no other tread.

Others, too, have found no grave, neither loving hands to soothe them gently to that long sleep where empire is forgotten and the world is but a dream; to such unquiet spirits nature alone must do the last dread offices, as she weans them from a troubled earth. . . .

Some in the course of their years found fame and glory, and their names are written at large among those which shall hardly die. But many there were who left no memorial; yet these, too, were fathers of children, and their children established themselves in the uttermost ends of the earth.

And as each generation loosed its hold, sailing quickly or slowly, with resignation or with sorrow, on that solitary voyage over mist-bound and shadow-stricken seas to the ultimate shore where perchance our dreams shall become realities and our realities be as dreams; as each generation passed to join its fathers, something was left of its work upon earth, some visible sign of its being survived.

The cities they planned were rebuilt, but the outlines remained as they planned them. The creeds they believed were revised, but the hope of salvation endured. The empire they founded split, but a new nation arose from the ruins.

A. Wyatt Tilby.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE v

BOOK IX

THE SPLIT OF EMPIRE: 1763-1801

CHAP.

I. THE PEACE IN AMERICA: 1763 1

II. THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE: 1764-74 . . . 7

III. THE IMPERIAL CIVIL WAR: 1775-83 46

IV. THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: 1776-1801 . . 103

V. THE CONSTITUTION OF CANADA: 1763-91 . . . 146

BOOK X

THE CALL OF THE WEST: 1587-1860

I. THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE: 1587-1848 . . . 181

II. THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY: 1668-1784 . . . 201

III. OVERLAND TO THE WEST: 1578-1860 211

BOOK XI

THE BIRTH OF THE CANADIAN NATION: 1497-1867

I. NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR: 1497-1910 . . . 259

II. THE MARITIME PROVINCES: 1621-1867 282

III. THE TWO CANADAS: 1791-1837 317

IV. THROUGH STRIFE TOWARDS UNION: 1812-40 . . . 342

V. THE DOMINION OF CANADA: 1841-67 389

THE ENGLISH PEOPLE OVERSEAS

Book IX

THE SPLIT OF EMPIRE: 1763-1801

CHAPTER I

THE PEACE IN AMERICA: 1763

The long struggle between France and Britain in North America had ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1763. A few islands in the St. Lawrence, some fishing rights off Newfoundland, and the derelict settlement of Louisiana, alone survived the wreck of French power in the West; and even Louisiana was soon resigned to Spain. Practically the whole north-east of the continent, from Georgia to Baffin Land, from the tropic sugar-fields of the southern colonies to the yet untraversed ice-fields that surround the Hudson Bay, was now in English hands. The empire of which both Hakluyt and Spenser had dreamed was no longer an insubstantial prophecy but a definite possession: North America belonged to Britain by the triple right of discovery, settlement, and conquest, by the discoveries of the Elizabethans, the settlements of the Stuarts, and the conquests of the Georgians.

There was now no foreign menace to hinder Britain from planting her flag throughout the continent. Holland, her old rival, held not a foot of territory on the mainland. Spain had sunk into proud decrepitude; though still jealous of all encroachments on her monopoly, she was unable to resist them by force. The French Empire had disappeared. No other nation could compete against

North America a British Possession.

Britain: whatever difficulties faced her in the old world of Europe, or in that yet older Asiatic world which men such as Clive and Hastings were conquering, she had at length won unlimited opportunity for expansion westwards. The barriers which the French had erected along the Mississippi were broken down; the vast plains of the middle west lay open to the people of the two small Atlantic islands. Spain, indeed, still blocked the way to the Pacific in Mexico and California; but her ability to protect those distant dependencies was imposing only so long as it was unquestioned.

Close Relation and Friendship between America and England.

The British had carried their freedom overseas, and with their freedom their old loyalty to the Crown and love for the mother country. The colonists had, indeed, been rudely buffeted by Stuart king and Georgian governor; but nevertheless the western British states possessed their parliaments, their laws, their charters of liberty modelled on those of England. They were, perhaps, more divided in sympathy from their colonial neighbours than from Britain; if the careless, generous aristocracy of Virginia disliked the commercial people of New York and New England, and the puritans of the latter provinces detested the natural gaiety of southern life as untoward and ungodly, both could find friends across the water among the descendants of the stocks from which they themselves had sprung. The Puritan chapels of Connecticut and Massachusetts maintained a correspondence with the dissenting religious sects at home, and the pulpits of the new world were often filled from the conventicles of the old; while the southern planter was frequently connected with the county families of England, and the intimate ties of relationship survived the barriers of distance and the passage of time.

The Fairfaxes, for example, a typical southern family, who gave their name to Fairfax County in Virginia, had come over from England in the seventeenth century. Sprung from a

Northumbrian house of long descent, one of their number had fought for parliament against King Charles at Marston Moor; others settled in America, one temporarily in New England, a second with such great success in Virginia that the sixth Baron Fairfax, already the owner of estates in Kent, the Isle of Wight, and the Wharfedale district of Yorkshire, inherited over five million acres in that colony. He visited his American properties in 1739; and he was then so charmed by their beauty that he determined to remain there, and generously resigned his English possessions to his brothers.[1] A belief in republicanism, surviving perhaps from the English Civil War, was still the family tradition when the sixth of the name held sway in Virginia; but the Fairfaxes of the next generation fought loyally for the Crown against its foreign enemies. During the crisis of 1755, when the great struggle with France was imminent, one son expressed to the Governor of Virginia 'his intention and great desire of serving his country at this juncture'; a second was killed at Quebec whilst serving under Wolfe. Others maintained the reputation of the family for bravery in the West Indies; and, indeed, there were few Americans bearing the name of Fairfax in that generation who took no part in the wars.

Great possessions and boundless hospitality soon made them conspicuous among the leaders of Virginian society; and they were allied by marriage and friendship with a house that was destined to become far more celebrated than their own. One, Anne Fairfax, married Lawrence, the elder brother of George Washington; and George Washington himself was on intimate terms with the Fairfaxes, accompanying them on surveying expeditions, and in youthful days looking on them as his best

[1] The title, however, remained with the American branch, by whom it was claimed in 1908. The claim was allowed by the British House of Lords (London *Times*, 18th November 1908). The tenth baron was elected Speaker of the Californian House of Delegates in 1854; on his tomb in Washington are the words, 'Brave, gallant, and gifted, he was the tenth Lord Fairfax, baron of Cameron in the peerage of Scotland; but he preferred to be an American gentleman.'

friends.[1] The estates of the two families adjoined; and Mount Vernon, the home of the Washingtons, was within sight of Belvoir, the Fairfax seat.

But while the Fairfaxes thus struck deep root in America, they were careful to maintain the old connection with England. Correspondence between the two branches of the family was regular and affectionate. Visits were exchanged between the relatives with comparative frequency, in a day when travelling was tedious and expensive; and if their English cousins were amazed at the vast estates of the family at Belvoir in Virginia, the American Fairfaxes in turn were probably not less impressed with the older seat at Denton Hall in Yorkshire, and the quiet beauty of the surrounding dales through which the pebble-racing Wharfe hurries to join the more placid northern Ouse.

Such connections were kept up by many families on both sides the Atlantic; and they formed an appreciable element of good-will between mother and daughter lands. Emigration, too, from Britain was well maintained; and each new scheme for further colonisation brought fresh pioneers to the gradually retreating West in a steady stream which, despite the political revolutions and divided sympathies of the future, was not to diminish until the far waters of the Pacific burst upon the view of the first rough tamers of the American wilds.

Emigration and Expansion.

Sometimes, indeed, the vital tide seemed to flow almost too fast from England for her strength at home to be maintained. 'Our people have a strange itch to colonise America,' grumbled honest Matthew Bramble in Smollett's novel, 'when the uncultivated parts of our own island might be settled to greater advantage'; and soon afterwards a popular dramatist remarked in *The School for Wives* that 'England, by an unaccountable fatality, seems inclined to take up her residence in

[1] Letter, dated 10th September 1746, in Neill's *The Fairfaxes of England and America.*

America ; and, to cultivate the barbarous borders of the Ohio, we are hourly deserting the beautiful banks of the Thames.'[1]

But the emigration which a novelist and a playwright were ready to condemn was welcomed by those few who looked forward into the future, and saw the magnificent opportunities now outstretched before the English people overseas. An anonymous political prophet who wrote in the year of the Treaty of Paris, and projected his view to the opening of the twentieth century, foretold that in the reign of an imaginary George VI.,[2] the eleven million citizens that would then populate the united British dominions in America would be 'in possession of perhaps the finest country in the world. This wide region, which increased its people so surprisingly fast, was far from being forgot by the king, (who) was there sovereign of a tract of much greater extent than all Europe. The constitution of the several divisions of that vast monarchy was admirably designed to keep the whole in continual dependence on the mother country ; and (the people) had never made the least attempt to shake off the authority of Great Britain. Indeed, the multiplicity of governments which prevailed over the whole country, and the various constitutions, rendered the execution of such a scheme absolutely impossible.'

Prophecies of Success.

The prophecy rings mockingly across the ages at a riven empire ; but no cloud of coming disaster menaced the

[1] *Humphrey Clinker*, in which Matthew Bramble appears, was published in 1771 ; the *School for Wives* in 1774.

[2] I owe thanks to my friend Harold Steinhart for calling my attention to this prophecy, which was published under the title of *The Reign of George VI., King of Great Britain and Ireland*, in 1763. The unknown author also foretold that the British would capture Java, and Russia occupy all Northern Asia, both of which prophecies were fulfilled. But the gift of second-sight failed him completely when he announced that the British would conquer France, and the French be so appreciative of the Habeas Corpus Act that they would welcome their conquerors ; while he also failed to prophesy the French Revolution. It is rather curious that the historian Gibbon, whose view was directed mainly to the past, seems to have foreseen that event ; while the man whose view was directed solely to the future, knew nothing of it. Apparently the historian can sometimes beat the prophet on his own ground.

boundless horizon of hope which dawned for Britain in the year 1763. A previous age, it is true, had dreaded the growing power of the colonies, and even foreseen their imminent rebellion. When John Evelyn was a member of the Board of Trade and Plantations—the distant equivalent of the modern Colonial Office—in the reign of Charles II., he noted on 26th May 1671, that 'the condition of New England appeared to be very independent as to their regard for old England and His Majesty. Rich and strong as they now were . . . they were able to contest with all the other plantations, and there was fear of their breaking from dependence on this nation.' And on 6th June of the same year, the same diarist recorded that after 'a long debate, we understood they were a people on the very brink of renouncing any dependence on the Crown.'

Forebodings of Failure.

Nor were such views singular at the time. Twenty years later, in 1698, the Inspector-General of Exports and Imports wrote that 'we may let them (the New England colonies) grow in naval strength and power, which, if suffered, we cannot expect to hold them long in our subjection. An interest in America, generally speaking, may bring an immense profit to this kingdom if well looked after by the government, but otherwise in all likelihood it will either decline or come to a strength that may be used against us.'

Yet the empire had survived these forebodings of evil at home, even as it had survived the rivalry of the French in the West. And since the English in America had no desire to rebel, the English in England came gradually to believe that rebellion was impossible.

While the way thus lay open for the British to spread through the entire northern division of the western hemisphere, it might have been expected that some systematic effort would have been made to develop and extend the sea-board colonies far into the interior. The French had wisely done so, and their heritage had now fallen to Britain. There were,

indeed, many difficulties ahead, many problems to be solved, if the expansion of the empire into the unknown wilderness was to be successfully accomplished. Yet the prospect was one for which almost any national sacrifice might cheerfully have been made.

But we have already seen that England was unconscious of being a world-power.[1] Her people slumbered easily, secure in their triumph over France; her statesmen now blundered and failed where her soldiers had succeeded. Hardly anybody, in fact, save Pitt understood the meaning of the conquests he had planned; even he, it seems, did not at first realise that our opportunity was likewise our danger, and that by gaining much we stood to lose all, if we knew not how to shape and change our overseas policy in view of the new and altered conditions brought about by the fall of French power in the West. It is true that no shadow of conflict between the colonies and the mother country yet darkened the imperial sky. But the daughter states were rapidly growing to maturity, and we continued to treat them as children; they were advancing towards the wider freedom that is the inevitable portion of every healthy, adult British dominion, and we expected them to remain indefinitely in a state of tutelage.

The result was disastrous. Twenty years after the Treaty of Paris had ceded North America to Britain, the more populous half of the continent was irrevocably lost.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE: 1764-74[2]

THE almost forgotten impressions of the English travellers who visited the American colonies during, and immediately

[1] See vol. i. bk. v. ch. iv.

[2] Authorities.—Burnaby's *Travels in North America* for an insular view of the English colonies in 1759; his description may be compared

after the Seven Years' War, throw a curious and instructive light, not only on the people overseas with whom our statesmen had to deal, but also on that public opinion at home which our politicians sometimes lead and sometimes obediently follow. The views of an inconspicuous tourist are in one sense, perhaps, more significant than the subtle calculations of the statesman. The latter may indeed happen to be correct, while the former prove absurd in the light of after-wisdom. But the traveller conveys the transient ideas of his day where the statesman schemes for the future; his very prejudices, and his inability to rise above the accepted beliefs of his countrymen, have their own value in a record of the past.

An Englishman's View of British America.

We may therefore exhume some of the comments of Andrew Burnaby, an archdeacon of the Church of England, who travelled for several months in the American colonies at this time, and recorded in a diary published later, his notes on the settlers and their social life. His observations, when tested by other contemporary evidence, are generally as correct as his deductions and prophecies are at fault; but his errors are often not less instructive than his facts.

Burnaby found that the people of Virginia, the oldest English colony in America, were easy and good-natured, but

with that of Kalm, a Swede who also published an account of his journeys. Carver's *Travels through the Interior Parts of North America* treat mainly of Canada and the West. For the constitutional struggle, Stanhope and Lecky give the British point of view; the latter is more impartial, and far more complete and valuable. Trevelyan's *American Revolution*, though useful for its facts, is too biassed against the British to be considered a complete study of the period. Egerton's *Short History of British Colonial Policy*, which is full of thought as well as of research throughout, is especially necessary for the trend of events in this decade. Burke's *Speeches*, and the parliamentary records and political correspondence of the period, contain much of value; the pamphlets of the time (in the British Museum) should also be consulted. The American sources are fully indicated in Justin Winsor. Bancroft's *History*, apart from its great use as a collection of facts, is chiefly interesting during this period as showing the hostile attitude maintained even by liberal Americans of the nineteenth century towards Great Britain. The works of Benjamin Franklin and John Adams are indispensable.

indolent, vain, and imperious. ' They were haughty, jealous of their liberties, impatient of restraint, and could scarcely bear the thought of being controlled by any superior power. Many of them considered the colonies as independent states, not connected with Britain otherwise than by having the same common king, and being bound to her by natural affection. They thought it a hardship not to have an unlimited trade to every part of the world.' Yet, notwithstanding the freedom of these views, which were not unnatural in a colony whose legislature, the oldest English parliament overseas, had received scarcely a check during a century and a half, the Virginians were generous and loyal; and the same general character applied to the Marylanders, men sprung from much the same original stock, and engaged in similar industries under like conditions.

The Pennsylvanians, descendants of the settlers whose bickerings had gone far to break the heart of the Quaker founder of the colony, were frugal, industrious, and commercial. But they were ' great republicans, and had fallen into the same errors in their ideas of independency as most of the other colonies.' The territory included the abandoned settlement of New Sweden, and many Protestant immigrants had come over to escape persecution in the Catholic countries of Europe; and since there were thus many foreigners among them, the Pennsylvanians appeared not to possess ' the same filial attachment to Britain ' as most of her own children: but they were mostly quiet folk, inordinately fond of money, as much addicted to dancing and social amusements as their southern neighbours, yet showing some interest in literature and philosophy, while a few dabbled in painting. Another traveller observed that one German and two English newspapers were published weekly at Philadelphia—sufficient evidence of the large alien element in the colony.

The people of New Jersey, said Burnaby, were simple country gentlemen, who lived entirely on their estates; but

in New York City, where more than half the seventeen thousand inhabitants were thrifty, industrious Dutch, there were a few manufacturers, although these were not to be compared with those of Philadelphia. The Dutch language was gradually giving way before the incoming English [1]; but the future commercial capital of America was at that time no more than a quiet and pleasant provincial town. Trees grew in front of the brick houses which then lined the length of its Broadway, and the whole place seemed pretty and healthy, despite an inadequate water supply.

Further north, the Rhode Islanders appeared by no means so attractive. The private people were 'cunning, deceitful, and selfish,' the magistrates 'partial and corrupt.' The archdeacon ascribed their shortcomings to democratic institutions; but it is possible that political prejudice led him to exaggerate the faults of the descendants of Roger Williams.

His churchmanship, however, did not prevent him from liking the Nonconformist inhabitants of New England. Though they were formal and precise in manner, and the 'spirit of persecution was not yet totally extinguished,' they proved hospitable and good-natured; and Burnaby found that the arts and sciences had made greater progress in Boston than elsewhere in America, thanks to the excellent system of education which had prevailed there for more than a century.

The final conclusions of the traveller are tragically laughable. 'An idea, as strange as it is visionary,' said Burnaby, 'has entered into mankind, that empire is travelling westwards. It is illusory and fallacious; America is formed for happiness, not for empire. In 1200 miles I did not see a single object that solicited charity, but insuperable causes of weakness that will

Political Disunion of the English Colonies.

[1] *Geographical Description of New York*, 1753 (New York Historical Society), quoted in *Thomas Pownall, M.P., F.R.S.*, by C. A. W. Pownall.

necessarily prevent its being a potent state. The southern colonies can never possess any real strength : the northern are of stronger stamina, but they have other difficulties and disadvantages. They are composed of different nations, religions, and languages. They have a mutual jealousy of each other. Religious zeal is secretly burning in the hearts of the sectaries. . . . A union seems almost impossible ; difficulties of communication, intercourse, correspondence, and all other circumstances (being) considered. America must first be mistress of the sea before she can be mistress of herself.' It was highly extravagant, in Burnaby's opinion, to suppose that the colonies could ever maintain one hundred thousand men constantly in arms ; even so, a dozen frigates could easily ravage the whole coast, and thus reduce them to obedience. The true policy, he believed, was to enlarge the existing settlements, but not to establish fresh ones, for they could be of no use to the mother country.

The archdeacon's words summarise accurately enough the general attitude of the English people of his day towards the colonies ; the substance of his views was confirmed by the most acute American observer of the time. ' Different forms of government, different laws, different interests, and, in some of them, different manners,' wrote Benjamin Franklin ; ' their jealousy of each other is so great that, however necessary a union of the colonies has long been for their common defence and security against their enemies, and how sensible soever each colony has been of that necessity, yet they have never been able to effect such a union among themselves, nor even to agree in requesting the mother country to establish it for them. If they could not agree to unite against the French and Indians, who were perpetually harassing their settlements, burning their villages, and murdering their people, can it reasonably be supposed that there is any danger of their uniting against their own nation, with which they have so many connections and ties of blood, intercourse and affection,

and which it is well known they all love much more than they love one another ? '

Loss of the Colonies predicted.

But the prophetic voice of a foreigner had already indicated only too correctly the ultimate results of the fall of the French Empire in America on the relations between Britain and her oversea possessions. 'They will no longer need her protection,' said the Duc de Choiseul; 'she will call on them to contribute towards supporting the burdens they have helped to bring on her, and they will reply by striking off her dependence.'[1] It is the final condemnation of our imperial policy during the ten years after the Peace of Paris that a Frenchman could diagnose the disease which British statesmanship was only able to aggravate.

From the social aspect, indeed, the American colonies found considerable advantages in the connection with England. Politically, too, they had at the time few if any grievances. They were defended from foreign aggression mainly at the expense of the mother country; and they possessed as much internal liberty as, and perhaps better political institutions than the people of Great Britain itself. But the ineptitudes of many of their governors had often caused severe tension[2]; and the immortal reply of a British attorney-general, who had been asked to sign a charter for a college in Virginia, clearly showed that the mother country had little sympathy with, or knowledge of, her western children. When that functionary asked the purpose of the charter, an American suggested to him that the Virginians had souls as well as bodies; but he answered, with a stupid brutality which he possibly mistook for wit, 'Souls ? Damn your souls ! Grow tobacco.'

[1] The authenticity of the famous letter in which Montcalm predicts the loss of the American colonies is considered very doubtful by Parkman. It is quoted in Carlyle's *Frederick the Great* and Egerton's *Colonial Policy*.

[2] See the examples given in vol. i. bk. iv. ch. v.

Commercially, however, the Americans had some reason for the complaints which Burnaby had heard: the tariff laws in many cases pressed hardly on their growing commerce, and the Navigation Acts hampered their export trade. But both Britain and British America were becoming increasingly industrial countries; and it should not be beyond the capacity of a commercial community to settle purely commercial questions without unfairness.

Provincial Patriotism and Local Interests the leading Colonial Characteristics.

The relations between the mother country and the colonies were thus burdened with a remembrance of the disagreements of the past: and that natural divergence from the parent stock which every healthy child must show as it grows towards maturity had already begun in British America. But it had not as yet progressed very far. The colonies were, indeed, more democratic in life and thought than the mother country: no relics of feudal times had crossed the Atlantic under English auspices; the one attempt to plant an aristocracy in North Carolina had conspicuously failed.[1] And increasing wealth had not yet begun to form a new plutocracy which should replace in some degree the older aristocracies of Europe. Apart from this distinction, however, the average Englishman in America differed little from the average Englishman in England. The Virginian or Marylander was, perhaps, generally more ignorant, while the New Englander was certainly better educated than people of a similar class at home; but the outlook of all alike was probably very similar and very restricted. Yet life may not have been less happy because it ran in a narrow groove.

British America was still, in fact, a collection of transplanted English provinces, which looked to England as to an always distant, generally cool, but rarely tyrannical parent. Yet the mother country was loved and esteemed: 'to be an Old

[1] See vol. i. bk. iv. ch. iii. The institutions of the French in Quebec, however, were feudal in character; see bk. iv. ch. iv.

England man in America,' said Benjamin Franklin in 1766, 'was of itself a character of some respect, and gave a kind of rank among us'; even in American business letters, England was always spoken of as 'home.'[1] And the intellectual food of the colonies was exported from England; such literature as America possessed was still drawn almost exclusively from the older country. It is true that there were local newspapers; but beyond the provincial journal with provincial news—for external events were heard of through external sources, usually by means of English letters brought in by sailing-ship —the American printing-presses were occupied with little more than an occasional sermon or pamphlet.[2] And the inspiration even of these was mainly drawn from England: the western continent remained during yet another century, and for many years after political separation had taken place, purely insular and English in its mental character.

But a colonial, or more truly a provincial, form of patriotism already existed, and had done since there first rose up in America a race of Englishmen that knew not England. The born Virginian loved Virginia, the born New Englander loved

[1] 'The attachment to England was such that to whatever the colonists wished to affix the stamp of excellence the title of "English" was always given.'—Alexander Garden, of South Carolina.

[2] I spare my readers the sermons, but some of the pamphlets are amusing enough to merit quotation. A political versifier addressed the Association of Delegates in 1774 in this strain:—

'Then Carolinas, North and South,
(The cunningest, we trow,
For they will not give up their rice,
Nor yet their indigo),

Deputed representatives,
As we ourselves profess,
To represent them in one grand
Continental Congress.'

The writer was evidently a better patriot than poet. In another pamphlet (*A Cure for the Spleen: A Dialogue between a Southern Delegate and his Spouse*, 1775) the husband remonstrates thus with his wife:—

'I submit for peace sake to be led by the nose;
Don't make the world think that we're come to blows.'

Which was probably a counsel of perfection.

New England, with the same love that the Devonian or Yorkshireman at home loved the warm red west or the gray cold north of older England; but no common sentiment yet bound the colonies together. The last of the Stuarts had endeavoured to unify the administration of British America; but the colonists would have none of it. The common menace of the French Empire at their rear had not sufficed to join the divergent interests of the various classes of settlers; and when at length the danger of foreign aggression was removed in 1763, there seemed no unifying force to draw the thirteen English colonies together.

That force, unhappily, was to be supplied from without by Britain, and its working partially cemented by the Imperial Civil War; and instead of colonial patriotism rising through a national American sentiment into the wider patriotism of an imperial commonwealth, the unity of the English race was to be shattered for ever, by the act of a monarch whose youthful obstinacy was infinitely more harmful than the insanity of his declining years, and by the suicidal policy of an administration which pursued the shadow of a non-existent revenue while it dissipated with the mad prodigality of a spendthrift the substance of English loyalty overseas.

An empire had been acquired by Britain: it had not yet been consolidated. But although a federation of the colonies seemed hopeless at the time, even to those who perceived its urgent imperial necessity,[1] the importance of putting the naval and military defence of the English settlements on a proper and adequate footing after the Peace of Paris was obvious to all; it was admitted, indeed, by the colonists as well as by the English at home. Few believed that France would acquiesce in her defeat; and the history of the next few years proved that she took the first opportunity of reopening the quarrel. And in the event of

Imperial Defence and the Colonies.

[1] Franklin told an American correspondent that the colonies were like a disjointed serpent, and said they must 'join or die.'

war, the English colonies were exposed to a French naval attack from the sea; they were even more exposed at all times to an attack from the American aborigines at their rear on land.

From the latter they could defend themselves in the future, as they had done in the past; from the former, since they possessed no fighting vessels, they were compelled to rely for protection on the imperial navy. And since they were thus protected, since they were, moreover, increasingly prosperous and rapidly growing in wealth, it was but reasonable that they should pay to the imperial treasury part of the cost of their own defence.

But the moment, as well as the method, chosen by the British Government for bringing the question to a direct issue was most inopportune. There is no time when the burdens of military taxation are more heavily felt or more keenly resented than at the close of a great and exhausting war. The lust for military glory has been gratified; the victorious nation, like the young man in whom the passion of love has been sated, prepares to sleep a while. But the price has still to be paid: and some, at least, of the American colonies were already overburdened with the obligations they had contracted during the Seven Years' War.

It is true that the colonies were wholly indebted to Britain for their existence, and in great part indebted to her for their maintenance against foreign dangers. It is equally true that they were sometimes unready to contribute anything to their own defence. 'The country knows her danger,' said a member of the Virginian Council in 1756, 'but such is her parsimony that she is willing for the rains to wet the powder, and the rats to eat the bowstrings of the enemy, rather than attempt to drive them from her frontiers.' But other colonies, and those of New England in particular, since they were more exposed to attack, had aided loyally in raising supplies and sending troops against the enemy. They had organised the

memorable and successful attack against the French stronghold at Louisbourg in 1748. Connecticut maintained five thousand men under arms during the Seven Years' War; Massachusetts raised a citizen militia numbering seven thousand, and taxed herself heavily for their upkeep. New Jersey contributed at the rate of a pound sterling annually for every inhabitant of the colony while the war lasted.

Massachusetts, indeed, complained with some reason that the other provinces shirked the burden of the struggle, while many even of her own citizens removed elsewhere to escape the taxes she had imposed on herself for the imperial war. And though the protest was justified—for some of the settlements, and especially Pennsylvania, had contributed few men and less money to the common cause of the contest against France—it must be remembered that even when the English in America had hesitated or refused to aid in the imperial military operations, their attitude was, at least, partially explained by the supercilious condescension with which their previous assistance had been accepted. Until the year 1757 all officers in the regular army above the rank of captain took precedence of all commissions of whatever rank in the colonial army. And the harm done by General Braddock in Virginia in 1755, when he sneered at the colonial militia, and refused colonial advice in the conduct of a colonial war in which he himself lost both life and reputation, can hardly be overestimated.[1]

But these considerations weighed not with the British Government in the desire, just and reasonable in itself, to obtain a direct colonial contribution towards the expenses of the civil and military establishments of the empire. No such contribution had been obtained or even asked for before; when it had been suggested to Sir Robert Walpole, the premier of Great Britain, a generation previously, that he should raise

[1] See vol. i. bk. v. ch. iii. For the attack on Louisbourg, see bk. xi. ch. ii.

a fund of the kind by excise duties levied in the colonies, he had replied cautiously but wisely: 'I have old England set against me, and do you think I will have New England too? . . . I will not be the minister to enforce taxes at the expense of blood.' The problem was therefore, obviously, a delicate one: but the difficulty need not on that account have been necessarily insuperable.

Parliament and Taxation of the Colonies.

It is true that the constitutional right of the imperial parliament to tax the colonies was doubtful. The colonial charters made no mention of such a right; and it is but reasonable to assume that had that right existed, it would have been exercised before. The American colonies, too, were not represented in the imperial parliament. Massachusetts and Virginia sent no members to Westminster to sit side by side with the members for British counties and boroughs; and it was a fundamental axiom of English politics that there could be 'no taxation without representation.'[1]

But at the same time the imperial parliament had always regulated both the external and the internal trade of the colonies; and though that regulation was not unnaturally disliked, it was submitted to. In any case, the right of the imperial authorities to regulate colonial trade was not, and never had been, disputed. And there was not, as was pointed out a year or two later, any difference in principle between trade regulations which produced revenue and imperial taxes which likewise produced revenue; if the British Parliament could enforce the one it possessed an equal right to enforce the other.

[1] It will be remembered that in the early days of Massachusetts the colonists had declared that 'our allegiance binds us not to the laws of England'; while it was laid down in England in the reign of Charles II. that the ordinary British law did not apply in another colony (Jamaica) unless it was specially so laid down in each individual statute. (See vol. i. bk. ii. ch. ii. and vi.) But so far as I can discover, there are no later examples of this kind, and the doctrine had long been tacitly abandoned both in the colonies and in England.

The question, too, of representation was theoretically clear; it was stated with great force by Lord Mansfield in his speech defining the legal position during the troubles which now ensued, 'There can be no doubt but that the inhabitants of the colonies are as much represented in parliament as the greater part of the people of England are, among nine millions of whom, there are eight who have no vote in electing members to parliament. A member of parliament, chosen for any borough, represents not only the constituents and inhabitants of that particular place, but he represents the city of London, and all the commons of the land, and the inhabitants of all the colonies and dominions of Great Britain.'

The Americans, on the other hand, might reasonably contend that the anomalies of the British electoral system—and it was already perceived in England that there were anomalies in that system—could not be advanced as a reason for introducing anomalies in the colonial system. If parliament desired to tax them, it should have granted them representation at Westminster; and that scheme of reform had already been put forward without success. 'The time has been,' wrote Franklin in 1766, 'when the colonies would have esteemed it a great advantage as well as honour to be permitted to send members to parliament. The time has now come when they are indifferent about it, and the time will come when they will refuse it.'

The solution of that problem had been delayed too long. Yet had the methods of the twentieth century been tried in the eighteenth, had the British Government discussed the situation with the representatives of the colonies in the year 1764 as it did at the Imperial Defence Conference in the year 1909, it is probable that an agreement might have been arrived at which would have proved satisfactory both to the mother country and to the daughter states. But instead of discussing, the imperial authorities dictated; instead of recognising the practical obstacles in their path, they rode

boldly forward in the assurance of a vague and uncertain constitutional theory. By so doing, they showed that they utterly misunderstood the temper of the American colonies ; and the price of their mistake was the disruption of the British Empire.

Constitutional theory can never be the ultimate rule of statesmanship : and in the failure to recognise this fact lay the secret of the crisis which soon arose. The time, indeed, was ripening for the imperial authorities to relax rather than to tighten their grip over the commerce of the colonies ; and the parliamentary reform for which Britain herself was only ready half a century later was already overdue as regards the connection of the overseas empire with the mother country in the years immediately after the signature of the Peace of Paris.

The new policy, however, whether constitutionally right or wrong, whether justifiable or unjustifiable in practical working, was determined on by the British Government ; and it was introduced in 1764 by the new premier of Great Britain, George Grenville, a brother-in-law of the first Pitt.

Never yet were two more opposite characters related. The genius of Pitt could read and lead the minds of his countrymen and of his countrymen overseas ; Grenville was more versed in the law than in human nature, he understood the letter better than the spirit, and he valued uniformity of administration above the content of a united empire. His first act, which was to restore efficiency to the Government, only created distress and a spirit of resistance ; his second, which was to assist the defence of the empire, proved merely the stepping-stone to its disruption.

He saw that the restrictive Navigation Acts were constantly evaded in America. He saw that smuggling, owing to the weakness of the imperial executive, was an even more openly recognised form of business there than in England. He saw that the king's customs were annually defrauded thereby of the greater part of their dues. He recognised, as everybody

must have recognised, that the system was unsatisfactory which cost £7000 or more to collect customs dues whose total amounted to no more than £1000 or £2000 ; and he made an attempt to increase the efficiency of the collection.

The step was certain to be unpopular. But the cause of the demagogue was a precarious and profitless one in that age ; and for mere popularity Grenville had a contempt that was wholly admirable.

The imperial parliament had constantly interfered in the commercial affairs of the American colonies in the past ; and its authority in these matters had always been admitted by the Americans themselves. And there were precedents in any number for the regulation of American and British trade by the members at Westminster. Apart from the Navigation Acts, the Americans had long been forbidden to export woollens, since they might thus have damaged a leading English industry. In 1731 they were forbidden to manufacture hats, lest their products should compete with British goods. In 1750 the manufacture of American hardware was prohibited for a similar reason ; the lucrative whaling industry was likewise suppressed. Such measures were the practical application of the narrow commercial theories of the day ; but they would have been approved by every economist and assuredly by every English trader in the eighteenth century. And if parliament suppressed colonial industry on the one hand, where it might compete with the British, it assisted it on the other, where competition was impossible. It encouraged the American trade in tar, lumber, pitch, and hemp ; and the tobacco grown in Virginia and Maryland enjoyed an absolute monopoly of the home market.

The general administration of colonial industry by the imperial authorities was therefore not illiberal ; and it was very far in advance of the colonial system of Holland or Spain, whose oversea possessions had ever been harshly dealt with, and their interests invariably sacrificed to the immediate

benefit of the mother country, regardless of the ultimate prosperity of the colonies themselves.

The authority of the British executive, too, was weak in America, but comparatively strong in Britain; and while the Americans were therefore able to disregard many of the restrictions laid on their own industries, they reaped the full profits of the advantages secured to them in the English markets. Their commerce flourished, and they bought largely from Britain: from the purely commercial point of view they were the most valuable of British customers; and 'all this was done,' as Burke remarked truly ten years later, 'whilst England pursued trade and forgot revenue.' She was now to pursue revenue and forget trade.

In spite of the legal regulations which shackled it, colonial commerce had grown enormously during the eighteenth century. But many of the most prosperous industries of America could not have existed at all had the restrictive commercial legislation of Britain been systematically enforced from the beginning. That legislation, however, had never been strictly enforced; and the sudden severity of Grenville's administration made it extremely burdensome and unpopular. 'The publication of orders for the strict execution of the Molasses Act,' reported Governor Bernard of Massachusetts, 'caused a greater alarm than the taking of Fort William Henry in 1757.'

American trade soon suffered severely: yet the right of the imperial parliament to intervene would probably have been again admitted in the colonies, after some petitions of protest and much private grumbling, had Grenville been content merely to strengthen the old system. But he was not content with unpopular efficiency; he now determined to introduce what was in effect a new principle, and to tax the colonies directly for their own defence. The preamble of the Sugar Act of 1764 stated that it 'is just and necessary that a revenue be raised in America for defending,

The Stamp Act, 1764.

protecting, and securing the same,' and that 'the Commons of Great Britain, desirous to make some provision towards raising the said revenue in America, have resolved to give and grant unto Your Majesty the several rates and duties hereinafter mentioned.' A year later the Stamp Act was passed, which imposed certain duties on the colonies in order to defray the expenses of their protection.

The Bill passed without debate at Westminster; but immediate protests came from America. Five of the colonies petitioned against the new tax. Rioting broke out in the towns. Property was destroyed; and the king's officials were forced hurriedly to resign their posts to escape being tarred and feathered. Some were hanged in effigy; and the lieutenant-governor, chief justice, and sheriff of Massachusetts were pelted by an angry mob. In Virginia, where the distributor of stamps publicly declined to officiate, the bells were rung for joy. In New York the Stamp Act was carried about the streets on a pole, surmounted by a deathshead, and with a scroll inscribed 'the folly of England and ruin of America.' Elsewhere the stamps were burnt; business came nearly to a standstill, for the colonial merchants would order no goods from England while the obnoxious tax continued in force. And at a congress of delegates held at New York in October, 1765, the sole right of colonial taxation was claimed for the colonial legislatures. Even Governor Bernard, who was no friend to colonial liberty, doubted the wisdom of Grenville's policy, and wrote home in the following month that 'it must have been supposed (that) such an innovation as a parliamentary taxation would cause a great alarm, and meet with much opposition in most parts of America; it was quite new to the people, and had no visible bounds to it. Was this a time to introduce so great a novelty as a parliamentary inland taxation in America?'

It arouses Indignation in America.

Nor were the older and less democratic colonies less indignant. In the Virginia House of Burgesses, on 29th May 1765,

a young lawyer named Patrick Henry, who was gifted with extraordinary oratorical powers, had moved several resolutions of protest against the new tax; and when these were objected to as inflammatory, he vindicated them in a violent but able speech which closed with a daring flight of rhetoric. 'Cæsar,' cried Henry, 'had his Brutus; Charles his Cromwell; and George the Third'—('Treason, treason,' shouted other members)—'George the Third,' continued Henry, 'may profit by their examples. If this be treason, make the most of it!'

The example was infectious. The protest was modified but carried: and 'the resolves of the Assembly of Virginia,' said a correspondent of the British Government, 'gave the signal for a general outcry over the continent. The movers and supporters of them were applauded as the protectors and asserters of American liberty.'

Nowhere was more surprise felt at the defiant attitude of the colonies than in England; and to nobody was it more unexpected or more unwelcome than to the man who had provoked, and who should have foreseen, the trouble. For Grenville had no desire to deal arbitrarily with the colonies; yet the dogged tenacity of the man made his conduct seem even more arbitrary than it was. He had delayed the Stamp Act a year, in order to ascertain the opinion of the Americans themselves as to the impost; but though they had made known to him their extreme dislike of the measure, he had persisted in passing the hated Bill. So impolitic a mixture of conciliation and obstinacy seemed carefully calculated to irritate. Grenville should either have passed the Stamp Act without consulting the Americans, and risked the storm, or, having consulted them, he should have accepted their adverse verdict, and withdrawn his Bill. In this case the middle course was the worst.

But before the year was out, a new British ministry had been formed under the Marquis of Rockingham; and weak

though it was in leaders, in followers, and in debating power, it contrived to undo the evil work of Grenville. The protests from America, combined with the damage to British trade, had had considerable effect on English political feeling; and when parliament met on 14th January 1766, to discuss the situation in America, the Palace of Westminster witnessed one of the most memorable of all the great debates which have taken place in that great assembly. Edmund Burke delivered his maiden speech on the subject which was to inspire some of his most splendid rhetoric; and Pitt, who followed him, made his last magnificent oration in the House which had so long bowed before his eloquence. He expressed himself in full sympathy with the colonists: parliament, he declared, had no right to tax them, for they were unrepresented in parliament, and taxation and representation went hand in hand. Grenville replied ably enough with the narrow political logic characteristic of his nature. He pointed out correctly that many persons in Great Britain were taxed, although they were unrepresented in parliament; he showed that there was no difference in principle between taxes and duties, and that the Americans had never disputed the authority of the British parliament to levy duties on the colonies; and he charged the Americans with ingratitude for declining to pay for a war so entirely in their interest as the last had been.

It was against the rules of the House of Commons for a speaker to address the House twice during the same debate; but the general voice of the members called upon Pitt to reply to Grenville. His answer was that of a statesman refuting a bank clerk. He had not come to parliament, he said, with the 'statute book doubled down in dog's ears to defend the cause of liberty.' The charge of ingratitude was brushed contemptuously on one side. All the English bounties to America, declared Pitt, were for English purposes. Our trade with the colonies was three millions sterling a year, and trade had carried us through the last war. 'This you owe to

America,' he continued, 'and shall a miserable financier come with a boast that he can fetch a peppercorn into the exchequer to the loss of millions to the nation? . . . I rejoice that America has resisted; three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to submit to be slaves would have been fit instruments to have made slaves of the rest.' The speech closed with the prediction that, though England could crush America to atoms, her triumph would be hazardous; for if America fell, she would fall like the strong man: she would embrace the pillars of the state, and pull down the constitution with her.

The language of Pitt was perhaps extreme, but the occasion was extraordinary. And his eloquence had saved the empire for a time. A month later, on 21st February, his advice was taken by a willing ministry, and the Stamp Act was repealed, after a stormy debate which lasted till near dawn. A great crowd awaited the members as they left the House; Pitt was cheered with enthusiasm, and his admirers insisted on following him home. But Grenville was cursed and execrated by the people who pressed around him. Irritated by their taunts, he turned and caught one of his tormentors by the throat. 'If I may not hiss, sir, I hope I may laugh,' returned the man; and he laughed in the face of the vanquished politician.

The Stamp Act repealed, 1766.

The effect in America was immediate and universal. Colonial discontent at once died down. The cities celebrated the event with great rejoicings and festivities. The more isolated settlers were not less relieved, although their demonstrations were less conspicuous. Resistance had been made, and warning had been given: for the time it seemed that both would be effectual.

Satisfaction in America.

'The repeal has composed every wave of popular disorder into a smooth and peaceful calm.' The writer of these words was a struggling young New England lawyer, hardly known at that time beyond his own colony, but respected within its

borders as a man of upright life and considerable ability. He was one of the few persons who had no liking for the connection with Britain; but the extreme views already held by John Adams, a future President of the United States—for such was the man who admitted, perhaps with some regret, the effect of the repeal—were far too advanced for his fellow-citizens. And had Britain profited by Pitt's great remonstrance, John Adams might have remained solitary in his opinions till his death. But the virus introduced by Grenville had done its work: the poison could not now be expelled from the body politic of the empire.

A new and stronger ministry soon took the place of the Rockingham cabinet; and its leaders consisted mainly of that wretched band of sycophants and courtier-placemen known as the 'king's friends,' who were pledged to carry out the wishes of George III. on all points, whatever might be the cost to the country or their reputation. It is but fair to their memory to say that they cared as little for the one as for the other; and when the king, who had only consented grudgingly to the repeal of the Stamp Act, again insisted on the taxation of America, they dutifully prepared to comply. George III. was not the first monarch to dissolve an empire which soldiers and statesmen had built up; he is not the only ruler who has found obedient tools to carry out his evil plans.

The 'King's Friends.'

But the new measures went as much beyond those which Grenville had introduced as Grenville's policy had gone beyond the previous lax administration of the Navigation Acts. On 2nd June 1767, a resolution was passed in parliament 'that a duty of threepence per pound avoirdupois be laid upon all tea imported into the colonies and plantations.' The opposition party was too weak and disorganised to protest. Pitt was suffering from the mysterious malady which temporarily overclouded his splendid intellect, and could neither speak in parliament nor transact any

Renewed Taxation of British America.

business; and since his elevation to the peerage and his inclusion in the new ministry he had lost the greater part of his old influence. And the system of coercion was now carried still further. It was provided that a board of commissioners resident in the colonies should take charge of the American customs service; that cases arising under the Revenue Acts should be tried in the admiralty courts without juries; and that the salaries of the colonial judges and other royal officials should be paid out of the proceeds of the new duties. Almost at the same time the functions of the Assembly of New York, which had refused to make certain appropriations ordered by parliament, were suspended.

These measures, like the Stamp Act, were considered of small importance in England; but to British America the principles involved were vital. The Massachusetts Assembly at once submitted a petition of protest to the imperial authorities; but so careful were they to avoid any language which might be construed into disloyalty, that they revised its wording no fewer than seven times. Yet the petition was vouchsafed no answer, and the Assembly were informed that they must either withdraw it or submit to immediate prorogation or dissolution. And the other twelve colonies, which had been appealed to by Massachusetts, were similarly bidden to take warning by her example.

The Colonies again protest.

The challenge was accepted. By a vote of 92 to 17, the Massachusetts Assembly refused to withdraw; the other colonies followed suit. But meanwhile more drastic methods had been determined on in England. An Act which had been passed in the reign of Henry VIII. provided that an English subject accused of crimes committed outside the realm could be tried and punished in England. The law could have had no reference to colonial conditions, since it was enacted before any British colony was in existence; nevertheless both Houses of Parliament now addressed the king, praying that

persons charged with treason committed in the colonies might be brought to England for trial under the terms of a statute more than two centuries old. It is not difficult to understand that the net of treason was devised to catch many American fish. The law was never, indeed, enforced; but the mere fact that it was held over their heads as a possible means of coercion was sufficient to irritate the colonists still further.

While such was the temper of the rulers of England, provocation was not wanting from the rulers of America. 'The people here,' wrote the Governor of Massachusetts in 1766, 'talk very high of their power to resist Great Britain; but it is all talk. New York and Boston would both be defenceless before a royal fleet.' Others followed suit with similar counsels; and the weakness of the colonies was rejoiced over by a British Government whose policy, no longer dictated solely by considerations of imperial defence, but now rather the offspring of madness and sycophancy, was steadily driving America towards rebellion.

Yet the protest of the Virginian Assembly—and Virginia was accounted the colony in which the lamp of loyalty burnt most steadily—should have warned the king and his ministers, could anything have warned them; but George III. now expected the colonists to display the same obsequious obedience that he exacted from his ministers at home.

The Virginia Resolves, 1769.

On 16th May 1769 the Virginia House of Burgesses resolved unanimously:—

'That the sole right of imposing taxes on the inhabitants of this His Majesty's colony and dominion of Virginia is now, and ever hath been, legally and constitutionally vested in the House of Burgesses, lawfully convened, according to the ancient and established practice, with the consent of the Council, and of His Majesty, the King of Great Britain, or his Governor for the time being.

'That it is the undoubted privilege of the inhabitants of

this colony to petition their sovereign for the redress of grievances; and that it is lawful and expedient to procure the concurrence of His Majesty's other colonies, in dutiful addresses, praying the royal interposition in favour of the violated rights of America.

'That all trials for treason, misprision of treason, or for any felony or crime whatsoever, committed and done in this His Majesty's said colony and dominion, by any person or persons residing therein, ought of right to be had, and conducted in and before His Majesty's courts, held within his said colony, according to the fixed and known course of proceeding; and that the seizing any person or persons residing in the colony, suspected of any crime whatsoever, committed therein, and sending such person or persons to places beyond the sea to be tried, is highly derogatory of the rights of British subjects, as thereby the inestimable privilege of being tried by a jury from the vicinage, as well as the liberty of summoning and producing witnesses on such trial, will be taken away from the party accused.

'That an humble, dutiful and loyal address be presented to His Majesty, to assure him of our inviolable attachment to his sacred person and government; and to beseech his royal interposition, as the father of all his people, however remote from the seat of his empire, to quiet the minds of his loyal subjects of this colony, and to avert from them those dangers and miseries which will ensue, from the seizing and carrying beyond sea any person residing in America, suspected of any crime whatsoever, to be tried in any other manner than by the ancient and long-established course of proceeding.

'Ordered, that the Speaker of this House do transmit, without delay, to the Speakers of the several Houses of Assembly on this continent, a copy of the resolutions now agreed to by this House, requesting their concurrence therein.'

For the outspokenness of these resolutions, which have become known as 'the Virginia Resolves,' the Assembly was

at once dissolved by the governor of the colony, who remarked simply, 'I have heard of your resolves, and augur ill of their effects. You have made it my duty to dissolve you, and you are dissolved accordingly.'

But the burgesses continued to meet elsewhere; an agreement was signed which bound the people neither to import nor to use any goods taxed by the British Parliament: and both the agreement and the resolves were copied by the other colonies. So well, in fact, was the pledge of not buying British goods observed, that the total amount of revenue which passed into the exchequer from the new duties in a year was the ridiculous sum of £295 sterling. And on the reverse side of the account was the ugly fact that no less than £170,000 sterling had been expended on military charges occasioned by the public disorders which the taxes had produced.

The British Government looked at the question solely from the financial and constitutional point of view, leaving the not altogether negligible item of mutual affection and respect entirely out of the reckoning. That affection they were dissipating as rapidly as a growth of two centuries can be dissipated by the wilful mistakes of a few years; the temper of the Americans towards Britain could no longer be described, as Franklin had described it in 1766, as 'the best in the world.' But in its financial aspect the British policy had been proved a failure by that most cogent of all financial arguments —a large deficit. And although constitutionally the imperial authorities may perhaps have still possessed the abstract right to tax America, yet after the colonial opposition to the Stamp Act that right should never have emerged from the dim regions of academic discussion into the actual realm of political facts.[1]

[1] The American historians and publicists were, until recently, unanimous in maintaining that Britain had no right to tax the colonists. The more impartial modern writers admit, however, that the question is doubtful; and one, Professor Channing of Harvard, even decides that Grenville's action was theoretically justifiable. But one and all are agreed

But the failure of their policy soon had its effect upon the Government. In April, 1770, the new American duties were all repealed, with the exception of the tax on tea: yet that single impost, which was only retained by a majority of one in a cabinet of nine, sufficed to assure the colonies that Britain still maintained unimpaired the right of taxing them. The principle was indeed explicitly so laid down in a minute of the Cabinet, which stated that, 'It is the unanimous opinion of the lords present . . . . that no measures should be taken which can in any way derogate from the legislative authority of Great Britain over the colonies, but that the Secretary of State in his correspondence and conversation be permitted to state . . .

The Taxes repealed; the Principle maintained, 1770.

that in practice the taxes were absolutely wrong. The extremer American opinion of the revolution period is well stated by Joseph Quincy, junior, in his *Observations* (Boston, 1774):—'The inhabitants of this northern region have constantly been in danger and troubles from foes open and secret, abroad and in their bosom. Our freedom has been the object of envy, and to make void the charter of our liberties the work and labour of an undiminished race of villains.' John Adams, writing as Novanglus, is less outspoken:—'Our provincial legislatures are the only supreme authorities in our colonies. Parliament, notwithstanding this, may be allowed an authority supreme and sovereign over the ocean, which may be limited by the banks of the ocean or the bounds of our charters; our charters give us no authority over the high seas. Here is a line fairly drawn, between the rights of Britain and the rights of the colonies, namely, the banks of the ocean or low water-mark, the line of division between common law and civil or maritime law.' But there were many voices in the minority on both sides the Atlantic; see, for example, *A Friendly Address to All Reasonable Americans*, printed in America, 1774:—'You, one and all, talk of your rights by charter; but are not some of the colonies without charters? And do all the charters convey exactly the same privileges and rights? Do any of them say that you shall not be bound by laws made in Great Britain?' On the other hand, see *America Vindicated, by a Friend to Both Countries* (Devizes, England, 1774):—'What wise nation in pursuit of a false notion of honour would, in an unnatural contest with her own children, inconsiderately adopt violent measures, at the risk of a civil war, one-third of her commerce, one-third of her nursery for seamen, one-third of her revenue, and that too at a time when she is groaning under the weight of army and naval establishments, and an immense national debt at her back?' See also *The Advantages which America derives from her Commerce, Connexion, and Dependence on Britain* (1775), and *America Vindicated from the High Charge of Ingratitude and Rebellion*—the titles of which pamphlets sufficiently characterise their contents.

that it is by no means the intention of administration, nor do they think it expedient, or for the interest of Great Britain or of America, to propose or consent to the laying of any further taxes upon America, for the purpose of raising a revenue; and that it is at present their intention to propose, in the next session of parliament, to take off the duties upon paper, glass and colours imported into America, upon consideration of such duties having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce.'

The news that the taxes had been repealed helped materially to improve the situation in America; for the next three years, in fact, the tide of colonial resentment seemed to slacken and ebb, until the renewed assertion by the British Government of their authority caused it to flow in greater force than ever before, after which the flood was soon past all damming. But even after the repeal in 1770, the colonists observed that the principle of taxation was still maintained by the British Parliament; the individual taxes were only repealed because they had failed to produce revenue. It was merely a question of time and opportunity for an enterprising Chancellor of the Exchequer to devise some fresh impost on the American colonies, whose burden should not again be so easily escaped.

'The worst is past, and the spirit of sedition broken,' wrote Commodore Hood to Grenville early in 1769. But other causes, unhappily, had by now tended to widen the rift between mother and daughter states. British troops had been quartered on the colonies, and they had been necessary to repress the disturbances that had broken out when the new policy was first enforced. Whatever principles an executive government may hold, whether it believe in the right of the citizens to tax and rule themselves or not, its first practical business must be to maintain the authority which it claims for itself unimpaired; and the British executive was notoriously weak in America.

But the presence of an army to carry out the orders of an

unpopular government must be unwelcome everywhere: it was peculiarly unwelcome in America. Every Englishman in England had a deep hereditary and well-founded objection to the maintenance of a standing army in times of peace. Its existence was not legally recognised; its presence was surrounded by stringent precautions. And that hatred of military rule had been carried across the Atlantic; the English in America, to whatever colony they might own allegiance, had the same hatred for a standing army as their brethren in England. Threatened as they had been for over a century and a half by the French and the American aborigines, severely as they had felt the attacks of both on several occasions, they had always chosen to risk the external dangers of invasion by depending on a militia, rather than risk any internal danger to their civil liberties by depending on a standing army. Yet British troops, from the British regular forces, were now quartered on the colonists; and their presence seemed to indicate that the cherished freedom of America was threatened.[1]

The conduct of that army has often been attacked by partisan or prejudiced writers; but the troops appear to have comported themselves singularly well on this occasion in extremely difficult circumstances. It is one thing to be a soldier, it is another to be a policeman; and it is never good for the morale of an army to be charged, as the British troops now were, with police duty. And the New Englanders naturally did their utmost to embarrass their unwelcome guests. The Council

[1] Franklin had foreseen that it might be necessary to keep troops in America, but for a different purpose. In 1764 he had written, 'It is very possible that the Crown may think it necessary to keep troops in America thenceforward, to maintain its conquests and defend its colonies, and that the parliament may establish some revenue arising out of the American trade to be applied towards supporting those troops. It is possible, too, that we may, after a few years' experience, be generally very well satisfied with that measure.' The experience of later British colonies since that time has confirmed Franklin's view; but it is a very different matter when the army is sent to repress, as it was in the present case, instead of to defend.

of Boston refused to provide free quarters or to find supplies, and backed up their refusal by appealing to a statute which the Governor of Massachusetts could not override. The officers wished to be friendly with the colonists, and to enter into social relations with the people around them; they soon discovered that they were boycotted. And the rank and file likewise found that the uniform which had been so popular in the British colonies ten years before, when the struggle with France was at its height, was now hated as the badge of despotism.

In these circumstances, it is not wonderful that there should have been an explosion; the only wonder is that it should have been so petty. On the evening of 5th March 1770, a small party of troops stationed at Boston came into collision with an abusive crowd composed of the less reputable elements of the New England capital. The mob seem to have brandished their clubs, and to have thrown snowballs at the soldiers; the soldiers in return opened fire, and half a dozen civilians fell. In a moment an uproar arose which might have had serious consequences. The troops, however, were at once ordered back to barracks, and subsequently commanded to leave the town; and, under the influence of the most prominent men in Boston, the tumult gradually died down.

The 'Boston Massacre,' 1770.

But not its memory. That miserable and regrettable affair was not forgotten until long after the coming war between Britain and America had ceased. It was a definite act that served to concentrate all the previous resentment against the army into actual hatred; and it was a dangerous sign that year by year the anniversary of the collision, which was soon dignified by the too imposing name of 'the Boston Massacre,' was celebrated with enthusiasm by the people of New England.

Yet with the troops removed from the town, and all the hated taxes save one repealed, things might still have gone well, had any desire for conciliation and friendship been shown.

It is true that some occasional disturbances still occurred, but the colonies were generally quieter: 'the people appear to be weary of the altercations with the mother country,' wrote a gentleman of Connecticut at this time; 'a little discreet conduct on both sides would perfectly re-establish that warm affection and respect towards Great Britain for which this country was once so remarkable.' And the Governor of Massachusetts reported that there was now a disposition in his colony to let the quarrel subside.

Repressive Policy of George III.

But the imperial policy had already gone further than the mere wish to raise a colonial revenue for colonial defence. It had now developed into the fatal desire to reduce to submission a people that would die rather than surrender its liberty; and that desire found its leader in Britain in the person of the king. Of few men can it be said that they do less harm when they are obviously insane than when they are apparently in their right senses; but it was true of the British sovereign whose acts now wrecked the British Empire. There are minds so petty that they despise all greatness; there are natures so obstinate that their persistence will attain the end pursued. It is not often that these characters are combined in the head of a nation: but the evil union appeared in George III. A king will sometimes tyrannise over his ministers, and play the autocrat with his subjects; but if he does, he will rarely allow the strength of his defences to be reduced. Yet George III. did so.[1] The third ruler which the house of Hanover had given to England was reckoned far more English in manners and sympathy than his predecessors; yet neither George I. nor George II. had misunderstood the character of the empire

[1] In 1774, the year before the war, the number of British seamen was reduced from 20,000 to 16,000; and the following year Burgoyne found the country 'without a single requisition (of war), gunpowder excepted.' It is true that the king protested against the reduction; but he chose the ministers who enforced it, and he did not dismiss them for having done so.

they ruled so greatly as the monarch who was now accounted a typical Englishman. And the king was, unhappily, his own chief minister.

Never before nor since in our history has parliament sunk so low both in power and in the estimation of the people as during these years. 'The House of Commons,' said an indignant remonstrance from the citizens of London at this time, 'do not represent the people'; and the taunt was true.[1] Popular election had become a matter of organised bribery[2]: a pension or a sinecure obtained the obedient and venal vote of a member of parliament; patronage now ruled politics, and principle was forgotten.

The corruption of the time cannot, indeed, be imputed to the king; for many years past every administration had bribed most of its supporters, and bought over as great a number of its opponents as it could. But when George III. began to use the political corruption of the day to further his own ends, he put his power to worse use than any previous minister during the century.

With his methods and administration at home we are not here concerned, although we may note that it was not a mere coincidence that the greatest disaster which the empire has known occurred during the years when the British Parliament was practically impotent, and that the second civil war of the English people took place when, for the second occasion in modern times, a British king attempted to introduce a system of personal and arbitrary rule which was utterly alien to the genius of the race. But revolt came against the royal policy

[1] Five years later Burke taunted the English people with indifference to the rottenness of their governments. 'As to the good people of England, they seem to partake every day more and more of the character of that administration which they have been induced to tolerate.' Another few years proved him to be wrong.

[2] Franklin's opinion of a general election in England was vigorously expressed:—'The whole venal nation is now at market, and will be sold for about two millions, and might be bought . . . by the devil himself.' —Letter, 13th March 1768.

in England within a decade. Ten years after the North Cabinet assumed office in 1770, a member of the House of Commons moved that 'it is the opinion of this committee that the power of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished'; and the resolution was carried. The power of the king was never again supreme in parliament.

But by that time the policy of George III. had already shattered the empire. With an almost inconceivable ignorance of the conditions prevailing in America—for a king is presumed to have assimilated the rudiments of knowledge as to the customs and traditions of his subjects—he hoped to dominate the thirteen English colonies, with their honest and courageous legislatures, as he had succeeded in dominating for the time the corrupt parliament of Britain. He hoped to be king of America as he was now king of Britain. He wished to extend his personal authority over the colonies as Grenville had wished to extend the authority of parliament. He saw, as the Americans saw, that in the right to impose taxation lay the crucial question of power; and he determined to force that matter to an issue.

A glance through the correspondence of George III. with his ministers reveals the workings of that shallow and petty mind as a stone thrown into a stagnant pool will reveal the depth of the muddy water. The king hated Pitt, now Lord Chatham, for having defended the Americans against the Stamp Act; he looked forward to the time when 'decrepitude or death' should free him from that 'trumpet of sedition.' He still desired to re-impose the Act which had created such resentment in America, and by this means to humble the colonies. 'All men feel,' he wrote, 'that the fatal compliance of 1766 has increased the pretensions of the Americans to absolute independence.' His ultimate aim, indeed, was as obvious as it was impossible of realisation; two centuries of history and three thousand miles of intervening water were insuperable barriers to the fulfilment of his desire.

Yet the king persisted in the endeavour to reduce the colonies to obedience; and his policy is nowhere more explicitly stated than in his letter of December 1774. 'I am not fond,' he then wrote, 'of the sending commissioners to examine into the disputes. This looks so like the mother country being more affraid (*sic*) of the continuance of the dispute than the colonies, and I cannot think it likely to make them reasonable. I do not want to drive them to despair but to submission.'

The hour had already come to put the matter to the test: and the new premier, the tory Lord North who had succeeded the whig Duke of Grafton, agreed in this respect with his master's views. 'The properest time to exert our right of taxation,' he wrote in 1773, 'is when the right is refused. To temporise is to yield; and the authority of the mother country, if it is now unsupported, will be relinquished for ever: a total repeal cannot be thought of till America is prostrate at our feet.'

The repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766 had been accompanied by an assertion of the supreme authority of the British Parliament 'to bind the colonies and people of America in all cases whatsoever.' In theory most Americans would probably have admitted the constitutional right of parliament without question a generation previously; many would still have admitted it with some hesitation, even during the strained relations which now prevailed. In practice it is certain that, from the moment when the first colonial legislatures of America had assembled, they would never have admitted the supreme British authority without very definite limitations.

The British Government, on the other hand, had no doubt as to the constitutional position: it had never for a moment admitted any colonial claim to be independent of imperial control. But while always maintaining its absolute right and supremacy in theory, the British Government had at the same time never before pressed its own authority. The

position was not, indeed, strictly defined, and even so clear a political thinker as Franklin confessed himself doubtful on the subject. 'The more I have thought and read on the subject,' he wrote, 'the more I find myself confirmed in opinion that no middle doctrine can be firmly maintained. I mean not clearly with intelligible arguments. Something might be said for either of the extremes, that parliament has a power to make all laws for us, or that it has a power to make no laws for us. Supposing this doctrine established, the colonies would be then so many separate states only subject to the same king, as England and Scotland were before the union.' It is, perhaps, not an unfair comment to make, that in theory parliament had the abstract power to make all the laws for America, and in practice it had the real power to make none.

A ruler of ordinary political prudence, relying partly on compromise and partly on well-founded precedents, would have left it at that, remaining contented with the very real power, which still existed unimpaired, of vetoing those acts of the colonial legislatures that appeared ill-advised and contrary to imperial interests. And putting aside all questions of racial affection, or of that natural sentiment which binds together a people as it does an individual family, the colonies were valuable to Britain for trade purposes; Britain was valuable to the colonies for the protection she afforded and the constant stream of emigration she sent thither to fill up their waste lands. That alone was sufficient reason for maintaining the empire as it stood, and for expanding it whenever an advantageous opportunity presented itself.

But compromise and precedent, the twin gods of British politics, had been deposed since the elevation of George III.

The Tea Duty, 1773.

And the policy of taxing America, which had not been formally abandoned with the repeal of the Stamp Act, was again introduced in 1773. The occasion, indeed, seemed aptly chosen. During the previous half-century,

the Americans as well as the English had become great drinkers of tea ; and a large part of the business of the East India Company consisted in the exportation of that herb from China to the home and colonial markets. The Americans, however, had ceased to buy their tea from the English Company, since they had been subjected to the new parliamentary duty. They now obtained instead a smuggled supply from the Dutch ; and the English trade had naturally suffered very severely. And since the English East India Company was in financial straits at this time, a scheme was planned in London which seemed at once to relieve the corporation of its difficulties, and to force the Americans to pay the disputed duty. The English Company was to be allowed to send its tea to America, with the English inland duty of a shilling per pound avoirdupois remitted from the price, but still subject to the threepenny duty payable in America. By this means the Company would be able to undersell its illegitimate Dutch rivals in the colonies ; and it was believed that for the sake of cheaper tea the Americans would consent to the imposition of the tax.

It is stated that a suggestion was made to the British Government that the threepenny duty should be paid by the Company in England, and added to the price of tea in America, in order to avoid any friction with the colonies. But to this the Government would by no means consent. They wished to establish a precedent in the taxation of America, and for that purpose the tax must necessarily be paid in America itself.

Little did they realise the political acumen or the persistence of the colonists. ' They have no idea,' wrote Franklin, ' that any people can act from any other principle but that of interest; and they believe that threepence in a pound of tea, of which one does not perhaps drink ten pounds in a year, is sufficient to overcome all the patriotism of an American.' If that were indeed the case, the Government were not suffered to remain long under the misapprehension.

The first tea consigned under the new arrangement arrived in the four chief ports of America in the autumn of 1773 ; but the reception of the vessels conveying the hated cargoes was such that none of the captains or crews ever forgot the experience. Philadelphia was so hostile that no attempt was made even to unload the tea, and the captain wisely turned his ship's head back towards England. At Charleston the cargo was landed and stored in a damp cellar, where it quickly rotted. A gale drove the tea-ships away from New York Harbour, and disappointed the people there of the expected prey : but the men of Boston were not fated to be thus balked by the storms of the Atlantic. On the night of 18th December, several of the inhabitants of the New England capital disguised themselves as redskins, boarded the vessels as they rode at anchor within Boston Port, emptied the tea out of the chests in which it had been stored, and threw it into the water. Their errand fulfilled, they returned peaceably and quietly ashore without doing further damage.

The 'Boston Tea-party,' 1773.

Within a few weeks the news arrived in England, and the British Government was furious at the failure of its plan. Repressive legislation was at once hurried through parliament : and, since Boston had been the most flagrant offender, the measures were directed chiefly against that city. A Bill was passed, which was henceforth generally known as the Boston Port Bill, by which all lading and unlading of goods, wares, and merchandise was to cease in that town and harbour on and after 4th June 1774, and the customs officers were to be transferred to Salem.

Punitive Laws against Massachusetts, 1774.

This measure meant the commercial ruin of Boston, which was at this time the chief commercial city of America ; another law, passed shortly afterwards, meant political ruin to Massachusetts, the flourishing province of which Boston was the capital. The charter of the colony was altered, and it was decreed that all its councillors, judges, and magistrates

should in future be appointed by the Crown, and hold office during the royal pleasure. By this enactment Massachusetts was no longer a free state but a subject province; a third law, passed almost at the same time, provided that any person indicted for murder, or other capital offence, might be sent by the governor to some other colony, or to Great Britain, for trial.[1]

There was little difficulty in passing these outrageously repressive measures through parliament. The premier obeyed the king; parliament obeyed the premier. The opposition were far too feeble to oppose; in the striking words of Horace Walpole, 'If a parcel of schoolboys were to play at politicians, the children that should take the part of the opposition would discover more spirit and sense. The cruellest thing that has been said of the Americans by the court is that they were encouraged by the opposition. You might as soon light a fire with a wet dish-clout.' The opposition were still, in fact, in that miserable condition in which Lord Townshend had described them two years before: 'Poor souls who can do no harm—the Dukes of Richmond, Devonshire, and Portland excepted—(they) seem to have left the nation entirely to this wicked ministry.' And the Duke of Richmond admitted that he was very languid about the American affair, since it was useless to renew efforts at opposition which always failed, and since nothing would restore common sense except the dreadful consequences which must follow the diabolical policy that was being pursued. Such disagreement as there was with the Government's proposals was almost invariably shouted down by the large and corrupt majority; no single protest, however powerful, would have availed more against the temper of parliament as it then was than the efforts of a single water-hose in a universal conflagration.

[1] The Quebec Act, which was also passed in this session, was also resented by the English colonists in America; but it was resented for very different reasons, which did them little honour. See chapter v. of this book.

Some few expressions of dissent uttered in that fatal session have, indeed, come down to us. Stephen, a brother of the more celebrated Charles James Fox, said truly that, 'We must either treat the Americans as subjects or as rebels. If we treat them as subjects, the Bill goes too far; if as rebels, it does not go far enough. We have refused to her the parties in their own defence, and we are going to destroy their charter without knowing the constitution of their government.'

The plain common sense of these remarks was transcended by the splendid eloquence of Burke, who attacked the administration in a speech to which even the docile followers of Lord North listened with respect. 'For nine years,' he said, 'the House had been lashed round and round the miserable circle of occasional arguments and temporary expedients. . . . By such management, by the irresistible operation of feeble councils, so paltry a sum as threepence in the eyes of a financier, so insignificant an article as tea in the eyes of a philosopher, had shaken the pillars of a commercial empire that circled the whole globe. . . . Do you mean to tax America, and to draw a productive revenue from thence? If you do, speak out; name, fix, ascertain this revenue; settle its quantity; define its objects; provide for its collection; and then fight when you have something to fight for. If you murder, rob; if you kill, take possession; and do not appear in the character of madmen as well as assassins, violent, vindictive, bloody, and tyrannical, without an object. But may better counsels guide you! . . . When you drive him hard, the boar will surely turn upon the hunters. If British sovereignty and American freedom cannot be reconciled, which will the colonists take? They will cast your sovereignty in your face, for nobody will be argued into slavery.'

But neither common sense nor eloquence moved the heart of that parliament from its evil course; and the tone of the House of Commons was imitated outside the walls of the assembly. If English merchants disliked a policy which

deprived them of much profitable trade, the country gentlemen of England were eager to suppress the Americans. The colonists were already openly spoken of as rebels; and a more insidious charge was brought against them when they were accused of cowardice.

They had fought bravely and well by the side of the British in the Seven Years' War. They had defended their homes against the attacks of savages. They had shown courage of no mean order in pioneering the unknown wilderness. But such facts availed nothing when it suited the purpose of London politicians to belittle their fellow-countrymen overseas; and no taunt did more harm, or caused a more persistent or more poisonous wound, than the unfounded charge of cowardice levelled at the Americans by men who had never faced anything more dangerous than a pheasant, or more formidable than a fox, in the whole course of their lives.

But the crisis had come at last. A long decade of disagreement, of public repression and unfounded accusations, of theoretical and practical misgovernment, had done its work; appeal must now be made to force. Yet the king did not regret the evil work he had accomplished. 'I am not sorry,' he said, 'that the line of conduct seems now chalked out. The New England governments are in a state of rebellion. Blows must decide whether they are to be subject to this country or independent.'

Outbreak of Civil War, 1775.

Eight years previously, George Washington, then nothing more than a prosperous country gentleman of Virginia, who had done his king and empire some service in the American wars, had written, 'That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, in defence of so valuable a blessing (as liberty) is clearly my opinion; yet arms should be the last resource.'

But George III. could appreciate neither the loyalty which dictated the latter sentiment nor the steadfast love of freedom which animated the former; his own idea is expressed, and his own pitiable misunderstanding of the situation is

conveyed, in his message to his minister. 'He says they will be lyons whilst we are lambs,' wrote the king, endorsing the words of the British general whose plan of campaign was soon to be rendered impotent by the attacks of raw American levies; 'but, if we take the resolute part, they will undoubtedly prove very weak.'

The result of the civil war which now broke out is the best comment on that mistaken hope and foolish prediction. The strength and unity of the empire were unquestioned until it conflicted with liberty; the day on which that conflict occurred its doom was sealed.

CHAPTER III

THE IMPERIAL CIVIL WAR: 1775-83[1]

Fifteen miles from Boston on the road to Concord is the little town of Lexington. Its existence prior to the Treaty

[1] Authorities.—In few departments of history are the materials more ample; in none have they been more thoroughly examined. Among the many complete works on the subject Fiske's *American Revolution* will be found most satisfactory. Written from the American point of view, it is generally impartial; its judgments may be corrected in some particulars by comparison with the chapters in Lecky's *History of England*, which deal with this period. Justin Winsor is still of great use. Bancroft is also of occasional value, although he, like most of the older American writers, is very biassed. The newer school of historians in the United States is more judicial and less passionate.

Other works that may be consulted with advantage are Gordon's *American Revolution*, Ramsay's *Revolution*, Graham's *United States*, Hutchinson's *Massachusetts*, Stedman's *American War*, Moore's *Diary of the Revolution*, Jones's *New York in the Revolutionary War* (loyalist), Lowell's *The Hessians in the Revolution*, Tyler's *American Literature*, the *Dartmouth MSS.*, the *Correspondence of George III. and Lord North*, the American Archives, Foublanque's *Life and Correspondence of Burgoyne*, Garden's *Anecdotes of the American Revolution*, Stryker's *Trenton and Princeton*, the *Letters and Journals of Madame Riedesel*, *An Original and Authentic Journal of Occurrences during the late American War*, by R. Lamb, late serjeant to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and the *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, edited by Ross. Trevelyan's *American Revolution* is interesting but too full of prejudice to be of much use. The *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* are of peculiar value. The list

of Paris had been marked by no events of note; it was merely another of those settlements 'in the wilderness' which the Puritans had planted as their numbers grew larger year by year; and when New England became prosperous, the stern creed of its first inhabitants softened gradually into the gentle pietism that was still prevalent in the eastern states in Nathaniel Hawthorne's day. It was here that, on 19th April 1775, an accidental skirmish between the English troops and the American yeomanry was the beginning of the civil war that is generally known in history as the War of American Independence. It is doubtful which side opened fire; but eight of the Americans were killed, ten were wounded, and the rest fled. The British marched on to Concord with some loss, but they were dislodged, and forced to retreat to Boston.

The Skirmish at Lexington, 1775.

The die was cast. 'They have begun it,' said an American when he heard the news. 'That either party could do. And we will end it. That only one can do.' For some time, indeed, the colonists maintained the loyal fiction that they fought, not against the British Crown, but against the British ministry. But that pretence could not be long maintained; and a year later the knot was cut with the publication of a Declaration of Independence on 4th July 1776.

The beginning of war found the American colonies unprepared with any plan of campaign, without equipment, without transport, without regular troops, and without officers. Grave inter-colonial jealousies still existed. No binding union yet joined the different

Weakness of the Rebels.

might be enlarged almost indefinitely; but those who wish to study the war in detail will base their researches on Winsor's *Handbook of the Revolution.*

There is a large Washington literature, some acquaintance with which is essential to an understanding of the period. The biographies by W. Irving, Jared Sparks, Lodge, and Marshall are full and accurate; the first possesses the greatest literary charm.

For the loyalists during and after the war, see Sabine's *Loyalists* and Ryerson's *Loyalists.* The account of their sufferings and emigration is reserved for the next two chapters.

provinces; on no point was friction between the various settlements more probable than on matters concerning military expenditure and the rights of the militia of one colony to enter the territory of another.

Nor were the colonists inclined to underestimate the strength of the enemy. They had seen the full might of the British Empire put forth in the Seven Years' War. They knew that the British navy commanded the sea, and that the British army had conquered the French in America. They knew that the British garrisons in their midst were constantly being augmented, that they themselves could only oppose raw, untrained levies to seasoned troops. And even though their citizens, uninstructed in military arts, might outnumber any army which the enemy could put in the field, the Americans knew that mere numbers counted for little in war; nor did they overlook the fact that their deficiency in the wealth to carry on the campaign was as serious as were their shortcomings in other respects.

Incapacity of the British.

They did not know, and they could not know, that the same palsy which had crept over the imperial parliament of late years had likewise affected the British army and navy. The generals who laughed contemptuously at the American soldiers for being peasants and ploughmen, proved as incompetent as they were boastful. Not one commander on the British side came out of the war with any increase of reputation; not one made any real use of his opportunities; not one showed the abilities of a first-rate leader.

The equipment of the army, too, had been neglected in England; in 1775 General Burgoyne wrote that 'after a fatal procrastination, not only of vigorous measures but of preparations for such, we took a step as decisive as the passage of the Rubicon, and now find ourselves plunged at once in a most serious war without a single requisition, gunpowder excepted, for carrying it on.'[1] And the dishonesty which

[1] See *Hist. MSS. Commission, Sackville Correspondence.*

corrupted official life in England [1] now affected the supply of munitions for the campaign. Slow merchant vessels were employed for the conveyance of troops and supplies to America instead of swift warships, because persons in high places would not surrender their commission of 3 per cent. on the hire.

For these reasons the British were not immediately prepared to wage an offensive campaign such as might, under a vigorous and capable leader, have reduced the New England colonies within a few months. A contest of this kind would not, indeed, have restored content to America. It might not even have avoided the eventual disruption of the empire. But at least it would have been far better than the long years of desultory warfare which were now to sap the strength of England and to stifle the last spark of loyalty in the colonies of the Atlantic seaboard.

If the Americans were not prepared for war with the mother country, they possessed an invaluable enthusiasm which was lacking in the British ranks. 'The time for supplication is passed,' cried Patrick Henry at the Virginia Convention in March 1774; 'the time for action is at hand. We must fight, Mr. Speaker, I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!' And when war actually broke out a year later, and Massachusetts at once appealed for help to the sister colonies, help was promptly given. The New England army soon totalled sixteen thousand men, of whom two thousand three hundred came from Connecticut, the same number from New Hampshire and Rhode Island, and the rest from Massachusetts. 'We shall be glad,' said the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, 'that our brethren who come to our aid may be supplied with military stores and provisions, as we have none of

[1] As to this, Lord Shelburne said, 'There was not literally a single office in the kingdom which was not worn out with corruption and intrigue. All the executive offices were sold by inferior persons in each department.'

either more than is absolutely necessary for ourselves.' A memoir of the time shows the ungrudging spirit in which the appeal was received. 'All the eatables in the town of Cambridge which could be spared were collected for breakfast, and the college kitchen and utensils procured for cooking. Some carcases of beef and pork, prepared for the Boston market, were obtained, and a large quantity of ship-bread, said to belong to the British navy, was taken.'[1]

The general in charge of the royal garrison had frankly confessed his astonishment months before at the support given to Massachusetts. 'It is surprising,' wrote General Gage on 20th September 1774, 'that so many of the other provinces interest themselves so much in this. They have some warm friends in New York, and I learnt that the people of Charleston, South Carolina, are as mad as they are here.' They soon gave yet more unpleasant signs of madness, which caused the incompetent general's speedy recall to England.

The British troops were meanwhile quartered in Boston, where they had remained inactive since the skirmish at Lexington; and they were now practically besieged in the New England capital by the colonial militia. The town was invested, said General Burgoyne, with a rabble in arms flushed with success and insolence; but for weeks no movement was made on either side. Both the Americans and the British were waiting for reinforcements, the latter certain of their arrival in due course, the former uncertain whether even their own small force would not melt away at the first attack.

The British besieged in Boston.

On the night of 16th June, however, the despised rebels seized and fortified a redoubt on Breed's Hill, one of the drumlins on the narrow neck of land overlooking Boston, on which the city of Charleston was built; and the battle, since known as Bunker's Hill from the neighbouring height, took place the following day.

[1] *Heath's Memoirs*, quoted by Trevelyan.

The fight was waged with desperate bravery on either side. The royal army attacked in front, and three generals—Howe, Clinton, and Pigott—led five thousand men against the fifteen hundred Americans on the height. In numbers the British had an enormous advantage. But they were forced to march through fields in which the summer hay reached their knees. They had to cross several fences before the redoubt was reached. And their difficulties were yet further increased unnecessarily, for they were burdened with heavy knapsacks.

Bunker's Hill, 1775.

The rebels, too, in spite of poor artillery and bad discipline —neither of which essentials to the science of war can be improvised in a few weeks—shot steadily and with terrible effect. 'Our light infantry,' said a British account of the fight, 'were served up in companies against the grass fence. Most of our grenadiers and light infantry, the moment of presenting themselves, lost three-fourths, and many nine-tenths of their men. Some had only eight or nine men a company left; some only three, four, and five.'

The attack failed, and a retreat was ordered; but the British officers were undismayed at their losses, and again the royal army advanced towards the redoubt. The Americans now reserved their fire until the enemy were within forty yards, and then took deliberate, deadly aim. Man after man fell; in some cases every officer in the regiment was killed: yet the British troops still pressed bravely onwards.

At length, however, it became evident that the redoubt was still impregnable. The attacking force retreated a second time, and again with heavy loss. They had shown a dogged courage of which any army might have been proud; but the height was still untaken, and Howe had determined to take it. He now commanded his men to lay down their knapsacks, and to reserve their fire; and once more an advance was ordered. Some of the officers protested, and with good reason, against

what appeared to be mere senseless butchery. But Howe had already explained that he would not desire one of his men to go a step further than he went himself, and when his decision was known, not one of the surviving officers or men—to their undying honour be it said—hesitated a moment in the desperate enterprise. With cool, unflinching valour the troops re-formed the ranks that had already been twice broken, the ranks in which every fifth man had already fallen on that murderous day ; and the third attack began.

But though the British knew it not the American ammunition was already exhausted ; and this time the royal army succeeded in storming the redoubt. A hand-to-hand encounter took place on the summit, but the rebels were forced to retreat ; the hill was at last left in possession of the British.

Three hundred Americans had been wounded ; one hundred and fifteen were killed. One thousand and forty British soldiers had fallen, of whom ninety-two were officers. Among those who lay dead was Major Pitcairn, who had been in command of the royal forces at Lexington, who had been wounded twice at Bunker's Hill and yet had led another charge, and whose last words while he lay dying with four balls in his body, were still to call on his marines to show what they could do against the enemy.

Such valour paid in blood for the total lack of generalship which had been shown in the frontal attack ; but the day was a rude shock to the British. The royalists had indeed conquered, but the Americans had proved their mettle. 'The rebels,' reported Gage, 'are shown not to be the disorderly rabble too many have supposed. In all their wars against the French they have showed no such conduct and perseverance as they do now.' Gage had forgotten the dogged pluck which the New Englanders had exhibited several years before in the capture of Louisbourg. But there were not many more taunts of cowardice after the battle of Bunker's Hill.

A few days previously, a commander-in-chief of the colonial forces had been appointed by the Congress which assembled at Philadelphia on 10th May 1775; and the fitness of their choice, which had fallen on Colonel George Washington of Virginia, was generally recognised, even at the time when local jealousies were strongly in the ascendant. It is doubtful, indeed, whether the Americans could have brought the long struggle to a successful issue without the aid of Washington. His presence gave a new character to the whole contest; and if to any one man can be given the honour of having founded the American Republic, to George Washington must that honour inevitably be given. The greatest patriot that America has ever produced, the pure and disinterested sincerity of whose life has passed into a proverb, was descended from an old and honourable English north-country house, one of whose members had fought for the Stuarts in the Civil War, and commanded the royal forces at Worcester against General Fairfax during the siege of 1646. After living quietly for some years under the Commonwealth at South Cave, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, two of the Washingtons had gone over to Virginia in 1657, and there settling in Worcester County, on the banks of the beautiful Potomac, the family had prospered and become the proprietors of large plantations.

George Washington, American Commander-in-Chief.

George Washington, who was born on 22nd February 1732, was his father's eldest child by a second marriage, and a great-grandson of the John Washington who had originally settled in Virginia. His elder brother, Lawrence, some years afterwards married a descendant of that Fairfax whom the ancestors of the Washingtons had opposed in England; and by a curious turn of fortune the two families, which had served on different sides at home, were now neighbours, friends, and relations in America. But in the events that led up to the Imperial Civil War, the sympathies of the Washingtons and Fairfaxes again gravitated to different sides; yet on this

occasion the Fairfax held to the royal, and the Washington to the rebel, cause.

There was little to mark out George Washington for greatness in his earlier years. He was well educated after the Virginian fashion of the day, and he became a devout but not extreme member of the Church of England, as was customary among the planters of his province. He led the ordinary healthy life of the young Virginian of property. He was interested, like the Englishman at home, in horses and dogs and the sports of the place ; but he was quieter, more reserved, and more studious than most of his fellows. The ladies of the colony found him susceptible but silent ; he sighed, and bemoaned his fate in verses as wretched as his heart—

> 'Ah, woe is me, that I should love and conceal,
> Long have I wished and never dare reveal.'

But great men are sometimes mute in the presence of the goddess they adore ; and Washington, since he feared to speak, could only hope that a life of retirement 'might in some measure alleviate his sorrows by burying that chaste and troublesome passion in the grave of oblivion.'[1]

The more active career which presently opened out soon worked a partial cure. Washington was appointed to survey some of the unmapped lands in the west of Virginia ; and he executed his task with such minute accuracy that his charts have never been superseded.[2] But the military spirit inherent in his family was not long in showing, and the opportunity for its exercise soon came.

In the campaign of 1754 against the French on the Ohio, he served his apprenticeship to war, and his love for the life broke out in his private correspondence. 'Be the consequence

[1] In an old book of gossip and letters I have read that when Washington broached the subject of marriage to the father of the lady, he was answered in these terms : 'If that is your business here, sir, I wish you to leave the house, for my daughter has been accustomed to ride in her coach.' The Washingtons were wealthy, but George was a younger son.

[2] The same exceptional compliment has been paid to Captain Cook's chart of Newfoundland.

what it will,' he wrote, 'I am determined not to leave the regiment, but to be among the last men to leave the Ohio, even if I serve as a private volunteer. . . . I have a constitution hardy enough to encounter and undergo the most severe trials, and, I flatter myself, resolution to face what any man dares, as shall be proved when it comes to the test. . . . The motives that have led me here are pure and noble. I had no view of acquisition but that of honour, by serving faithfully my king and country.' He was enthusiastic after his first battle: 'I have heard the bullets whistle,' he said, 'and believe me, there is something charming in the sound.' He now admitted, too, that his 'feelings were strongly bent to arms.' In later years, when worn with the toils of many campaigns, he laughed good-humouredly at the martial ardour of these early letters, excusing himself gently by saying that he had been very young at the time.

In the subsequent contest with France he acquitted himself with such credit that it was remarked that every volunteer wished to serve under Colonel Washington; and he was eventually appointed commander-in-chief of the Virginian forces. But during his absence at the front in 1758 he had been elected a member of the provincial House of Burgesses; and early in January 1759—the year of Wolfe's victory at Quebec—he married a wealthy widow of his colony.

The union was one of quiet happiness, and Washington now settled down to a rural life, devoting himself to the personal care of his estates, and attending as occasion required to the political affairs of the colony. 'Thus provided,' he wrote, 'with an agreeable partner for life, I hope to find more happiness in retirement than I ever experienced in the wide and bustling world.' He had no children, but he carefully and lovingly tended the two children of his wife by her first marriage.

Among the occupations of these years was a useful scheme for draining the great Dismal Swamp of Carolina; and, busied

with such avocations, George Washington might have lived and died and left no other than a local name, had not the imperial crisis now forced him to the front. He had no desire for American independence, such as John Adams and Patrick Henry undoubtedly possessed; he had always felt, indeed, a warm attachment for England. But he was Englishman enough to place liberty before loyalty, and self-sacrificing enough to give up everything to the cause which he espoused; and although he still hoped for peace in 1774, Washington determined to be prepared for war.

He had already decided on which side to serve. 'Unhappy it is to reflect,' he wrote to George William Fairfax at this time, 'that a brother's sword has been sheathed in a brother's breast; and that the once happy and peaceful plains of America are to be either drenched with blood or inhabited by slaves. Sad alternative! But can a virtuous man hesitate in his choice?' He who had rendered loyal help to Britain in the backwoods of Virginia and Ohio, had determined 'to devote his life and fortune to the cause' of American freedom; and in this spirit he offered to accept the command of a regiment in Virginia.

But a wider field was fittingly reserved for that great patriot. At the suggestion of John Adams of New England, Washington was appointed commander-in-chief of the American army; and he accepted that difficult position, albeit modestly declaring himself unequal to the command, and refusing any salary for the post. 'I am now to bid adieu to you,' he wrote to his brother a few days later, 'and to every kind of domestic ease for a while. I am embarked on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and in which, perhaps, no safe harbour is to be found. I have been called upon by the unanimous voice of the colonies to take the command of the continental army, an honour I neither sought after nor desired, as I am thoroughly convinced that it requires greater abilities and much more experience than I am master of.'

Washington's distrust of his own abilities was not shared by those of his countrymen who knew him best, nor was it justified by his able conduct of the war; but the difficulties with which he had to contend were in sober truth appalling.

A large proportion of the colonists, especially at the beginning of the war, sympathised with Britain. A still larger proportion, which had no particular sympathy with Britain, had yet no desire to engage in armed rebellion. Those who openly wished for separation were an active band, but their numbers were small; probably they were not in a majority even in Massachusetts, and they were certainly far stronger there than in the other colonies. And those who secretly wished for separation, although their numbers were rapidly increasing, were at present of little use to the rebel cause; while it is doubtful whether they were more numerous than those who secretly wished to remain within the empire.

Extraordinary Difficulty of his Position.

In a word, there was no organised rebellion, and Washington had to create and train his army—and to do so while war was already in progress—before he could use it. It is only when one realises this fact that the full measure of the incompetence of the British leaders is perceived; as it is only when one realises the active loyalty which George Washington had shown towards his king and empire that the full measure of the folly of the British policy towards America is appreciated.

Bunker's Hill had, indeed, taught the rebel troops that they could stand up to the British—a lesson which proved invaluable in the later stages of the campaign; and the inaction of the royal forces in Boston, which continued for many weeks after the battle, showed that their dearly-won victory had been of little profit.

But meanwhile all was confusion in the American quarters. The trained military eye of Washington, accustomed to the regularity of previous campaigns, at once noticed the seemingly hopeless chaos which prevailed. He commented on

'the mixed multitude of people, under very little discipline, order, or government' which he found in the colonial camp; and independent evidence shows that he did not exaggerate. John Adams, who was now steadily coming to the front as a leader of public opinion in New England, admitted that insubordination was rife among the troops. The provincial Assembly of Massachusetts regretted that 'the youth of the army were not impressed with the absolute necessity of cleanliness in their dress or lodging, of continual exercise and strict temperance.' And the military chaplain, William Emerson of Concord—an ancestor of Ralph Waldo Emerson—remarked that 'the camps were as different in their form as their owners in their dress; and every tent was a portraiture of the temper and taste of the persons encamped in it. Some were made of boards, and some of sailcloth. Again, others were made of stone and turf, brick or brush. Some were thrown up in a hurry; others curiously wrought with doors and windows, done with wreaths and withes, in the manner of a basket. Some were proper tents and marquees, looking like the regular camp of the enemy.' The good chaplain thought the variety 'rather a beauty than a blemish'; but Washington knew that no discipline could exist where there was no order, and that discipline was the first essential of an army.

Insubordination and Desertion in the American Army.

Rations, indeed, there were in abundance in the rebel camp: but they had no engineers to conduct the siege of Boston, and no blankets or firewood to warm the soldiers at night. Money was short, and the stock of ammunition was practically exhausted. So deficient were the Americans, in fact, in the latter respect, that one officer seriously suggested that the troops should be armed with bows and arrows; and another project, which was put forward but never carried out, was the seizure of a royal powder-magazine hundreds of miles away in the Bermudas.

In this predicament the first act of Washington was to evolve

order out of chaos. Some kind of uniform was given to the soldiers, who were at once told off into brigades and divisions. The rudiments of military discipline soon took the place of the original independence : ' The strictest government,' wrote Chaplain Emerson, ' is taking place, and great difference is made between officers and soldiers. Every one is made to know his place, and keep in it, or be tied up and receive thirty or forty lashes, according to his crime.' [1]

The new methods were inevitably unpopular in an army of volunteers : but they were essential to success. Yet other difficulties hampered Washington at every turn ; the old jealousies between the colonies still existed, and a Connecticut private would not serve under a Massachusetts officer, while troopers from Massachusetts refused to enlist under a Rhode Islander. In vain the commander-in-chief reminded his men that they were a national army and not a provincial militia, while he lamented in his letters to Congress ' the egregious want of public spirit that prevailed.' It was found necessary to appoint the officers of the American army first, in order that the men themselves might choose under whom they would serve.

But while an elementary show of order was thus being introduced by somewhat novel means into the ranks of the army, the army itself was gradually melting away. The troops had been brought together by a sudden crisis. They had not enlisted for any definite period, and, like all irregular forces, they desired to return to their homes as soon as the battle was over.[2] Within a week after Bunker's Hill was

[1] It is a fair example of Trevelyan's bias that in quoting these remarks of Chaplain Emerson, he omits the sentence referring to flogging in the American army. A few chapters previously he remarks that the colonists were disgusted at the existence of the practice in the British army ; one would not suspect from his description of the war that flogging ever took place under Washington. Such distortions of fact degrade history to the level of a party political pamphlet.

[2] It is curious to reflect that the Maratha leaders in India would have been faced with a precisely similar difficulty had they not imposed a sterner discipline than Washington was able to enforce. See vol. ii. bk. vii. ch. ii.

fought, hundreds had gone back to their own farms or townships to get in their hay and to tend their cattle; and it was found, wrote Washington in disgust, 'as impracticable to stop a torrent as these people.' Sixteen thousand men had assembled round Boston in the first flush of enthusiasm; but when the summer of 1775 drew to a close, not half that number remained. The seriousness of the situation may be gauged from a report of the Massachusetts Committee of Safety. 'The whole of a company of fifty men, save two,' said that body, 'have scandalously deserted the cause of their country, and stained their own honour by leaving the camp and returning home'; and the conduct of one company was typical of the rest. And since the troops were free to desert or to stay, it was utterly useless to order them back to join the depleted ranks of the American army at Boston.

The defection caused Washington many regrets and many a sleepless night; and at this time he admitted that he would have been far happier in the quiet retreat of a wigwam in the backwoods than as the leader of a mutinous army, could he have reconciled so easy and delightful a repose with his duty to his country. But he loathed the lack of similar patriotism in others with an intense but righteous indignation: 'such a dearth of public spirit, and such a want of virtue,' he wrote in a private letter; 'such stock-jobbing and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another in this great change of military arrangement, I never saw before.'

But there is a force in a free community which, when it is fairly roused, is far more effective than the most stringent edicts of an absolute autocracy. The force of public opinion soon made the deserters regret their hasty departure from the field of action. They were jeered at as cowards in their own townships. Their neighbours pointed at them the finger of scorn. Their very wives looked coldly at such timid defenders of their homes. And that most potent force of all in New England, the Sabbath sermon, was directed at the heads

of the miserable volunteers. The pulpits of a Puritan province echoed with merciless denunciations of their treachery; and they speedily discovered that the bullets of the enemy were preferable to the contempt of their own kinsmen.

One by one they straggled back to the army; and for a while there was little fear of a second defection. Others, too, were now encouraged by the example; a corps of riflemen had already arrived in camp from the southern colonies, and many additional recruits were in time spurred to join the force under Washington's command. By February 1776, his army numbered 17,000 men. In 1776 Massachusetts provided 13,372 men, Connecticut 6390, Virginia 6181, and Pennsylvania 5519; and before the end of the contest Massachusetts had sent 38,091 men, Connecticut 21,142, Virginia 20,491, and Pennsylvania 19,689, to take service with the commander-in-chief.

But during the whole eight years of the war this question of recruits and deserters, the gravest, perhaps, of all Washington's difficulties, was never thoroughly overcome. Some of his men would always desert before a battle; others ran away in the middle of the fight; still more discovered that the army had no further need of their services when once an advantage, however trivial or however doubtful, had been gained. Hundreds of the troops displayed so pressing an anxiety to see their native province again that they always cut short the term for which they had enlisted by a month or six weeks, and left the commander-in-chief defenceless before the close of a campaign. 'Home-sickness in winter,' wrote General Schuyler with much reason, 'was the periodical American distemper.' Hundreds more would only join when a victory had been won, and these would then take the place of those soldiers who threw down their arms—or more commonly annexed them as family heirlooms—because they chose to imagine that that same victory had left their country secure for a time.

There was thus a continual change in the composition of the heterogeneous regiments which Washington had to command. There was frequently insubordination on the part of the generals over whom he was placed in authority. And to add to his difficulties, the members of the very Congress which had appointed Washington often intrigued against him, neglected or refused to send him supplies, and hampered to the best of their ability the one man who was able to save the country from defeat.

A revolution, in fact, brings to the front the best and the worst human materials of which a nation is composed; and the revolted British colonies were no exception to a universal rule. The best that America could produce was excellent; but the worst was very bad indeed. Yet often as Washington broke out scornfully in his private letters and despatches to Congress at the insubordination and lack of patriotism in the army, at the selfishness and incompetence of some of his officers, at the criminal neglect of Congress itself, he never desisted from the arduous task to which he had been appointed; and never, save on a memorable occasion at Monmouth Court House, when he called one of his subordinates 'a damned poltroon,' did he lose that habitual self-control which distinguished him from all the lesser men by whom he was surrounded.

The unworthy leaders and followers of the American army force themselves upon our notice in any record of the war, as the less desirable type of American politician will compel some attention when discussing the foundation of the United States. The dissensions of the latter nearly ruined the republic during the first critical years of its existence; the defections of the former were truly stated to have 'more than once threatened us with ruin which, humanly speaking, nothing but the supineness and folly of the enemy could have saved us from.' But the shortcomings of both throw into stronger relief the pure character and splendid services

of George Washington; his is the one grand figure among the multitude of lesser men engaged on either side in the struggle for the maintenance of empire and the preservation of freedom.

The individualism and self-reliance typical of the character of the English in America revolted at first from the discipline essential in a military camp; but those who were worth anything as fighting men soon recognised the necessity of obedience to their superior officers. It was not from these that any real trouble was experienced. It was the presence of 'your noisy Sons of Liberty' who, as a colonel of the rebel forces remarked, 'were the very quietest in the field,' that hampered the American generals; and such contingents as 'that discipline-hating, good-living-loving, to-eternal-fame-damned, coxcombical crew we lately had from Philadelphia' were a continual source of difficulty.

Many foreigners who were sincerely enthusiastic in the cause of liberty came over from Europe to assist the Americans; and among those whose help was gratefully remembered after the struggle were Lafayette, a nobleman of France, and Kosciuszko, the Polish patriot. But not all, by any means, were welcome or worthy allies. A large number were disreputable adventurers, who had left their country for their country's good. These men, as Washington learnt by bitter experience, had no attachment to America 'further than interest bound them. They had no influence, and were ignorant of the language they were to receive and give orders in. Consequently great trouble and much confusion followed' their inclusion in the army.

While such men formed a considerable proportion of the rebel army, the loyalists had good reason to jeer at the sight of 'General Convict and Colonel Shoeblack' serving under Washington. They laughed, too, at the renewed outbreak of the old provincial jealousies when the New Englanders complained that the southerners habitually referred to them

as ' damned Yankees.' And although the proffered military services of twenty-four aged gentlemen of New York, whose united years reached a thousand, and whose grandchildren numbered a hundred and fifty, were a gratifying testimony to the enthusiasm felt for the rebel cause, the presence in the ranks of such ancient and inexperienced warriors could not but prove more dangerous to the American commander-in-chief than to his opponents.

Yet there was a steady leaven of sterling material ready to follow Washington through every campaign, else even he could never have succeeded in creating an army out of a disunited rabble. Long experience in the backwoods of Virginia and Maryland had made the volunteers from the southern colonies adepts at the use of a gun; and they adored a general whom they were able to claim as their own countryman. The farmers of the north likewise rendered splendid service that saved many a critical position by the rapidity with which they threw up entrenchments; with such work they were naturally familiar from their daily life at home. And the dogged courage of the original settlers in New England was soon found to have survived among their descendants in as great a degree as their love of freedom; they were sternly enthusiastic in a cause of whose justice they were assured from every pulpit. Our ' minister encorridged us to enlist under the great general of our salvation,' wrote a recruit, whose piety was better than his orthography; and many believed that heavenly as well as earthly salvation was secured when they enlisted under Washington.

' We thought, being denied just things,' Oliver Cromwell had once said in justification of war, ' we thought it our duty to get that by the sword which was not to be had otherwise! And this hath been the spirit of Englishmen.' It was this spirit which now animated New England in the Imperial Civil War, as it had animated England herself under an older tyranny; and the same reliance on divine aid, the same

intolerance of all opposition which arises from an absolute conviction of the righteousness of a cause, combined with the same practical ability in organising victory from defective materials, showed that the Puritans who revolted from George III. were stamped in the same mould as their forefathers who had revolted from Charles I. Much, indeed, of the language used in New England at this time would have sounded familiar to the Ironsides who had rolled the royal troops into confusion at Marston Moor and Naseby; the admonitions and encouragements addressed to the American volunteers were full of the Biblical quotations dear to Puritan ears.

'It is nothing with God to help,' wrote Governor Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut to Washington on 31st July 1776; 'whether with many, or with those who have no power. He hath so ordered things in the administration of the affairs of the world as to encourage the use of means, and yet so as to keep men in continual dependence on Him for the efficiency and success of them.' And on another occasion this stalwart assured the commander-in-chief that 'the Supreme Director of all Events hath caused a wonderful union of hearts and counsels to subsist among us. Now, therefore, be strong and very courageous. May the God of the armies of Israel shower down the blessings of His divine providence on you.'

'Trouble,' wrote another when misfortunes came, 'does not spring out of the dust, nor rise from the ground. It is God who has blunted the weapons of our warfare, and fashioned the counsels of our wise men to foolishness.' Many a sermon was preached on this subject during the war, and a favourite text on which to found a homily was 'Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.' And he was reckoned a poor pastor that could not point to several troopers who had joined the American army directly in consequence of his weekly exhortations. The chapel became a recruiting-office, and the pulpit a formidable engine of war.

But men of this character allowed not their reliance on

divine aid to blind them to the need for human effort. While they endeavoured to promote godliness in the army by forbidding cards, games of chance, and swearing, they were fertile in expedients for assisting the troops in a practical manner. When the supply of shot ran short, a statue of George III. at New York was melted down into forty-two thousand bullets. Hymn-books, Bibles, and other available books were used for wadding; literature thus serving the cause of liberty in wholly unexpected fashion. An American navy was improvised out of the mercantile marine of New England; and so inefficient had the British fleet become of late years through the bribery and favouritism exercised in the appointment of its officers, that the daring captains of the rebels met with no inconsiderable success. During the first eleven months of the year 1777, no fewer than two hundred and eighty-three prizes were brought into Boston; and the city which George III. had attempted to ruin was said to be 'almost as thronged with people of all nations as the Strand or Cornhill' in London.

The Stars and Stripes, 1776.

The flag of the United States, a simple emblem of thirteen stripes to indicate the thirteen states of the union, was hoisted for the first time on 1st January 1776; and it was in this year that Governor Trumbull addressed Washington again with full hope for the future. 'We have seen,' he wrote, 'the wonderful ways and marvellous works of the Lord. When we are doing our duty, and using such means as He hath put in our power, we may then stand still, and hope to see our salvation.'

Continued Inaction of the Royal Army.

But the royal army still remained cooped up in Boston while Washington was struggling with the early difficulties of his command. No further attempt had been made to subdue the rebels after Bunker's Hill; and, as month after month went by, the British troops began to suffer heavily from confinement and inaction. Scurvy and smallpox broke out; famine prices prevailed in

the besieged town, and the provisions that were available were of bad quality. And no fresh supplies arrived, for disaster overtook a relief squadron that was despatched from England. Some of the vessels were wrecked; on others the vegetables fermented and rotted during the voyage; others, again, fell into the hands of the Americans.

The British leaders in Boston appear to have been ignorant of the weakness of the rebel force, and to have been incapable of taking advantage of that weakness had they known. At length, however, it became evident that the city was untenable; and, on 17th March 1776, Boston was evacuated by the royal troops. Such stores as remained unused were left behind; arms and ammunition to the value of over £25,000 thereby falling into the hands of the rebels.

Evacuation of Boston, 1776.

The vessels containing the discomfited army were ordered to Halifax in Nova Scotia; and with the troops were embarked some eleven hundred American loyalists, who had no mind to encounter the wrath of their triumphant countrymen now that Boston was left the independent capital of a revolted province. Those unhappy refugees had been among the wealthiest and most honoured of New England's citizens; but though they loved their native land as truly, perhaps, as those who had rebelled, they loved the empire more; and they now deserted home and possessions for the shadowy hopes and profitless vain regrets that are ever the lot of the exile.

Their condition was pitiable from the first, for accommodation on board the transports was limited and they were 'obliged to pig together on the floor, there being no berths'; while the recently-founded city of Halifax proved but a primitive, comfortless dwelling-place to those who had been accustomed to the best that New England could provide.

The rebels observed with joy that the final evacuation of Boston by the British coincided with the anniversary of the date on which the imperial parliament had decided that

the commerce of that city was to cease. The Boston Port Act had declared that no more trading vessels should enter or leave Boston harbour after 14th June 1774; on 14th June 1776 the departure of the last British warship from New England waters left Boston free to trade with all the world.

Britain prepares to reduce America.

But sterner work was afoot than the triumphant celebration of a local anniversary. The birth of a nation hung in the balance; and the vast preparations now making for the conquest of the American commonwealth threatened its destruction ere it was born. The king was fully determined to crush the rebellion, and the whole strength of Britain was to be put forward to subdue her revolted colonies.

'I am not apt,' wrote George III. on 10th June 1775, 'to be over sanguine; but I cannot help being of opinion that with firmness and perseverance America will be brought to submission. If not, old England will, though perhaps not appear so formidable in the eyes of Europe as at other periods, but yet will be able to make her rebellious children rue the hour that they cast off obedience. America must be a colony of England, or treated as enemy.' A few months later he stated that 'any other conduct but compelling obedience would be ruinous and culpable.'

It was already apparent that these were not idle words. With the extravagant economy characteristic of the English people, the army had been largely reduced during the preceding twelve years of peace; but every effort was now employed to increase its numbers. The renewed activities of the press-gang again made that institution hated in every town in the three kingdoms; but the persuasive accents of recruiting officers seduced many a quiet country lad from his peaceful home to a life of expected glory. But neither force nor cajolery could fill the ranks with the necessary number of men; and to repair the deficiency George III. now stooped to the expedient of employing foreign mercenaries in a civil war

against his own people. That base and impolitic act did more than any other to render the breach between Britain and America irreparable.

The less reputable and more needy courts of Europe were soon excited by the dazzling prospect of English gold in exchange for the loan of their troops. No stone was left unturned to obtain such aid; no terms were considered too preposterous for the English taxpayer to bear; few regiments were rejected as too incompetent to take part in a war against rebels. It is true that not every nation was prepared to be implicated in such dirty work. The most autocratic and the most liberal governments of the Continent stiffly refused the offer of George III. The Russian court at Petersburg was far from being noted at that period either for its strict probity or its excessive love of freedom; but it declined to sell its troops for service in America on any terms. And the Dutch at once rejected the offers of a subsidy on the sound principles that a commercial nation should not interfere in a foreign quarrel, and that the action of the Americans against England was as justifiable as that of the Dutch themselves had been against the Spaniards two centuries previously.

Foreign Troops hired for the Purpose.

Rebuffs of this kind did not, however, discourage a pertinacious monarch; and the petty states of Germany proved more pliable than their wealthier neighbours. George III. was Elector of Hanover as well as King of Great Britain; and his Hanoverian troops were soon on their way to the new world. The sovereign of the adjacent principality of Brunswick agreed to exchange several regiments for a heavy subsidy. The head of the insignificant state of Waldeck, a German province no larger than most English counties, lent six hundred men on similar terms. And the ruler of Hesse offered twelve thousand infantry and thirty-two cannon to the British Government at an extravagant price; that offer was likewise accepted. The enormous subsidy which the

Hessian prince received repaired the fortunes of a bankrupt country, and raised the court of Cassel to comparative wealth. But it is no pleasure to the English traveller who now sees the glories of Wilhelmshöhe palace and park, or maybe stands watching the fountains of that miniature Versailles as they delight a German holiday crowd, to reflect that those monuments of a provincial court would never have been erected had not a British monarch determined to subvert or trample on the British Empire.

Some of the regiments from Brunswick proved so inferior that they were scoffed at in England as containing nothing 'between grandfathers and grandchildren, with coaches and every other impediment for their officers, and without a necessary for their men.'[1] But the majority of the soldiers were excellent, and it was admitted that no such army had ever before been seen in America. In all, the royal troops numbered some thirty-five thousand men.

It was very evident that the war was to be carried on with vigour. The king was determined, and his ministers were still docile. Some few members of parliament had, it is true, protested against the employment of foreign troops to crush a civil insurrection; but their voices were as feeble and ineffectual as when they had opposed the repressive legislation of previous years. The Duke of Grafton foretold 'inevitable ruin' from this 'wild and destructive project' in the House of Lords, and Burke had no difficulty in demonstrating to the House of Commons that the king's policy had changed America from a steady source of income into an intolerable expense for the mother country. But their arguments and protests were addressed to deaf ears; the employment of German troops was approved in the lower House by a majority of 242 to 88.

The War not unpopular in England.

Nor can it be maintained that the nation as a whole opposed

[1] *Harcourt Papers*, letter dated 3rd April 1776, quoted by Trevelyan.

the war.[1] Some few officers resigned their commissions as a matter of conscience; the vast majority were troubled by no such doubts. Some few merchants who were nearly ruined by the war signed petitions of protest; they would have done no less had their trade suffered in a war with France. Some opposed the war because it was the king's war; but it was the unpopularity of the king rather than the justice of the American cause which moved them.[2] Some far-seeing men deplored the disruption of the empire; the majority of unthinking persons apparently believed they were taking the only course which could maintain it. The Whigs, it is true, opposed the war, and in doing so they uttered much good sense and much excellent rhetoric. But they opposed it mainly on party grounds, as they would have opposed any other war which had broken out while the Tories were in office; and it is difficult to see that the protests of Charles James Fox against the war with America were any more passionate—they certainly were no more effectual—than his protests a few years later against the subsequent war with France. And there was a large body of opinion strongly in favour of reducing America by force. Men so distinct in character and profession as Samuel Johnson and John Wesley were convinced supporters of the king's policy. Johnson wrote *Taxation No Tyranny* to undermine the American position, and Wesley copied his arguments in the pamphlet entitled *A Calm Address*, which had an enormous circulation throughout the entire country.[3]

[1] Trevelyan comes to an opposite opinion on what appear to me insufficient data. His reasons are stated in full in *The American Revolution*.

[2] See Wesley's letter to Dartmouth in *Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Fifteenth Report, Appendix, Part I. 'The bulk of the people in every city, town, and village where I have been do not so much aim at ministry, but at the king himself. They heartily despise His Majesty, and hate him with a perfect hatred.' And there were few parts of England with which Wesley was not intimately acquainted.

[3] Wesley's arguments, which are summarised in his *Diary*, are not without considerable force; the chief being that the Americans had never

Had there been, in short, any strong feeling against the war with the colonies, it is difficult to believe that, even in that degraded and corrupt period of political life, it would not have made itself felt in the country by very unequivocal signs; and that the Whig party, torpid as it was, and as it remained during six years more, would not have received some accession of strength. But, on the contrary, the Tory administration of Lord North gained in stability year by year as the war continued; and during the whole course of the struggle no such passionate feeling was aroused as was caused in London by the dispute over the election of John Wilkes for Middlesex, or by the religious riots in which the unhappy Lord George Gordon was implicated.

Desperate Position of the Americans, 1776.

The hope of conciliation was therefore baseless when the British troops landed at New York; and Washington had already assembled his motley regiments to dispute the passage of a great European army. The outlook for the American general could not well have been more gloomy than it was at that moment. Even in numbers Washington was inferior to the enemy; in discipline there could be no comparison. And the middle colonies were far more loyal to Britain than New England—a matter of which the inhabitants made no secret. They 'promise us three thousand of city militia,' wrote an officer in the rebel army, 'but we do not believe that we shall see half so many.' An ugly fact came to light when it was discovered that the Mayor of New York City was involved in a plot to kidnap Washington; and those in sympathy with the colonial cause were constantly ill-treated by the loyalists, as the loyalists themselves were harassed in New England by the rebels.

But if the situation of the insurgents was none too hopeful

been exempted from parliamentary taxation by their charters or any other instrument. But he has to admit that he was formerly of a different opinion, and he gives no reason for his change of view.

in New York, elsewhere it seemed desperate indeed. The revolted colonies had expected that Canada would aid them in the rebellion, and they appeared to have some ground for the belief that a lately conquered country would welcome the opportunity of throwing off its new masters. The Congress at Philadelphia had appealed to the French Canadians to join in the revolt; and it is evident from the subsequent course of the war that Britain could not have subdued them had they done so.

Canada refuses to join the Rebels.

But no response whatever came to the invitation, and an expedition was now planned to conquer the country. The campaign was brilliantly conducted by Benedict Arnold; but although Quebec was threatened, there was still no sign of any inclination on the part of the Canadians to join the rebels: and the invaders were soon disconcerted to find that of 'the better sort of people, both French and English, seven-eighths would wish to see our throats cut.' It speedily became certain that success was impossible under these conditions, and the army retraced its steps; but its misfortunes were not yet complete.

The ranks were thinned by desertion and disease; at Crown Point an outbreak of smallpox completed its discomfiture. 'Everything about this army,' as General Gates reported truly, 'is infected by the pestilence; the clothes, the blankets, the air, the ground they walk upon. . . . It would melt a heart of stone to hear the moans and distresses of the sick and dying.'

With the full knowledge of these depressing circumstances and of his own evident weakness, Washington took the field against the British in July 1776. Some time was now lost in the negotiations which followed upon an offer of peace by the British; but since nothing more than a bare pardon was promised, the rebels would obviously have had no security for their freedom in the future

The New York Campaign, 1776.

had they accepted the royal terms. They had not yet been defeated in any set engagement; but though their position seemed desperate, they were not the men to submit to a tame surrender of the principles for which they were fighting. The offer was kindly meant, as a means of saving further bloodshed; but the British terms showed a ludicrous miscalculation of the spirit which animated the American leaders.

Among the generals of the royal army who had arrived before New York were Howe and Clinton, both of whom had been engaged at Bunker's Hill; and Lord Cornwallis, at that time a capable soldier in the prime of life. He was one of the few British officers who did not leave his reputation behind him in America; but the brilliance of his subsequent career as statesman and warrior in India has effectually cast into the shade the memory of his considerable services and ultimate misfortunes in the Imperial Civil War.

The British troops were high-spirited and anxious for battle. They were assured of an easy victory over an army of peasants; so certain, indeed, were the regiments from the Scottish Highlands of the speedy triumph of their cause, that they are said to have brought their churns and ploughs across the Atlantic in the expectation that the rich farms of the rebels would soon be confiscated for their own particular property.

The royal army was under the command of General Howe: and had he used the opportunity which now presented itself, nothing could have saved Washington from a crushing disaster, while it is doubtful whether the infant republic itself would have survived the shock. But a strange alteration had come over Howe's character since he had led his men to the assault on Bunker's Hill. He had been one of the most dashing and reckless officers in an army which has always been noted for courage rather than caution; yet the memory of that terrible encounter on the heights above Boston seems to have paralysed

The British neglect their Opportunity.

the great military abilities which Howe undoubtedly possessed. He was now weighed down by a sense of responsibility which prevented prompt and decisive action at the moment when it was most required ; he became excessively careful in risking battle against an inferior force : and though Washington had the utmost difficulty in making his troops face the enemy—they ran on one occasion, said a disgusted American general, as though the devil was in them—Howe gained no decisive success during the whole of that summer.

Indecisive skirmishes took place from time to time between the two armies : but on the heights of Haerlem, near New York, the colonists were able to maintain their ground ; and when Howe at length moved forward at a slow and deliberate pace he never once followed up the advantages which he obtained.

An encounter occurred at White Plains, but Howe refrained from pursuing the flying rebels ; another British success was gained at Fort Washington, where the American commander-in-chief lost his best regiments and much of his artillery ; yet again no action was taken. A few weeks later Washington's total forces numbered no more than six thousand men ; his troops were deserting in large numbers every day as the winter drew near ; Philadelphia was at the mercy of the royal army : yet Howe went tamely into winter quarters at New York City, distributing his army over the colonies of New York and New Jersey, and sending a detachment on an utterly useless enterprise to occupy Providence in Rhode Island. General Howe, in short, was neatly described by a Virginia colonel as holding a mortgage on the American army, but deciding not to foreclose.

It is alleged in Howe's excuse that he was doubtful of the justice of the British cause. The sentiment might have done him honour as a private citizen ; but it is a soldier's duty to fight the enemy, not to judge him. It is said, too, that he was disappointed that so few American loyalists came

forward to serve under him; but his army was more than strong enough to defeat the whole rebel force without the aid of a single colonial volunteer. The experience of a single campaign, in fact, proved that Howe was one of that large class of men who, while able to display very genuine talent in a secondary position, fail altogether to rise to the situation when faced with the responsibility of chief and sole leadership.

The royal troops were well provided for during the severe American winter. They were warmly clad and properly fed; but most of the Hessians and a few of the British,[1] not satisfied with the comforts that had been provided, proceeded to plunder the inhabitants of the country they occupied. No distinction was made between loyalists and rebels by the marauders; 'the enemy,' wrote Washington, 'have treated all without discrimination.' And the adherence of the people of New Jersey and New York to the royal cause, which had survived the taxation of the imperial parliament and the tyranny which George III. had exercised on those New England neighbours for whom they felt no excessive affection, was now unpleasantly strained when their own hen-roosts were robbed and the domestic treasures of their own households were rifled by Germans who could not speak a word of their language, and by Britishers who recognised no distinction between the property of friends and foes. The loyalty of the middle colonies had been strong and unmistakable at the beginning of the campaign [2]; but it became a somewhat tepid sentiment after a few months of military occupation.

The situation of the rebel army, however, was very far

[1] The contemporary American writers are emphatic and unanimous in stating that the Germans were far worse in this respect than the British.

[2] 'The conduct of the Jerseys,' wrote Washington in December 1776, 'has been most infamous. Instead of turning out to defend their country, and affording aid to our army, they are making submissions as fast as they can.' But Judge Jones, an American loyalist, was soon forced to admit that the war seemed levelled less against rebellion than against the king's loyal subjects and all persons wherever the army moved.

from being so pleasant as that of the invaders. It is true that they were in little danger from the enemy at the moment. But the American troops possessed few provisions and hardly any clothes. The soldier who owned a whole canvas suit and a shirt to his back by day, together with a reasonably thick blanket by night, lived in comparative luxury; the majority were tattered and footsore, overrun with vermin, and often stricken by disease.

The sick were in yet more wretched condition. There was only one surgeon's mate to attend to five battalions at Haerlem. The stock of drugs and bandages was soon exhausted. Large numbers fell ill with pneumonia, dysentery, and typhus; and few of the sick ever recovered. The churchyards of America were soon full of silent testimonies to the cause of national independence.

In other respects, too, the American position was desperate. One general, Charles Lee, who was commanding the rebel troops in the north, had begun the first of those intrigues against Washington which sullied the patriotism of so many of the colonial leaders. He refused to obey the orders of the commander-in-chief, justifying himself on the specious ground that 'there are times when we must commit treason against the laws of the state'; and Washington's resources were cruelly diminished by Lee's defection.

There were unmistakable signs, also, that the Congress of colonial delegates at Philadelphia, to whom the commander-in-chief was responsible, and to whom, indeed, he was inclined at first to pay too much deference, were nervous at the danger which threatened that city from Howe's army; and a fortnight before Christmas 1776, they removed themselves to Baltimore.

Their departure naturally increased the already grave fears of the Pennsylvanians that their province would shortly be invaded by the British; so great was the apprehension, indeed, that one outspoken colonel of the rebel forces remarked

that he saw nothing but 'damned gloomy countenances wherever he went, except among the soldiers.' And the prevailing apathy of many of the colonists, which had become more marked now that the prospects of a successful revolution seemed remoter than ever, gave Washington good cause for disgust. 'You can form no idea of the perplexity of my situation,' he wrote to his brother. 'No man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of difficulties, and less means to extricate himself from them. However, under a full persuasion of the justice of our cause, I cannot entertain an idea that it will finally sink, though it may remain for some time under a cloud.'[1]

The only true test of constancy, on land or sea, in public or in private life, is when foul weather and misfortunes seem to blot out all prospect of safety or success. And it was precisely during this dark period that the genius of Washington shone more brightly than ever before. In the previous summer he had been unable to do anything but dog the footsteps of the royal army; and it was the over-caution of the British commander-in-chief rather than the generalship of the American which had saved the rebels from disaster. Even had Washington been a Napoleon or an Alexander, he could have done little more at that time with his ill-disciplined, ill-clad, ill-fed, and ill-provided army; and although the Virginian planter was a great commander, he would himself have been the first to disclaim any title to rank with the greatest of the world's military leaders. He had committed some mistakes in the field during the campaign, although he had done his utmost with the troops at his disposal; but his determination to fight to the death was as strong as ever. On one occasion at this time he was asked what steps he would take if Philadelphia were captured by the British; and in words which recall the heroic decision of the Dutch patriot to 'die in the last ditch,' Washington

[1] Letter from the camp, dated 18th December 1776.

had answered that, rather than lay down his arms, he would first retreat beyond the Susquehanna River, and that, if necessary, he would then retire into the Alleghany Mountains, among whose wild fastnesses the royal troops might search for him in vain.

But Washington had now taken the measure of the enemy, and his daring attack on an exposed portion of the extended British line at Trenton once more put heart into the American cause. The small town of Trenton which lies in New Jersey on the northern side of the Delaware River at a point where several highroads meet, was occupied by three regiments of Hessian infantry under Colonel Rall. That officer was a strict disciplinarian, but a poor soldier; he paraded and drilled his troops every day, but he refused to throw up an entrenchment against a possible attack, even when warned that the Americans might take advantage of his exposed position. 'We will go at them with the bayonet,' he replied; and by thus despising the powers of his enemy he invited the defeat which was now inflicted on him. **Trenton, 1776.**

Two days before Christmas, Washington announced his intention in a letter to his adjutant-general. 'Christmas Day at night,' he wrote, 'one hour before day, is the time fixed for our attempt on Trenton. For heaven's sake keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us—our numbers, sorry am I to say, being less than I had any conception of. But necessity, dire necessity, will, nay must, justify an attempt.' The Delaware was to be crossed in three places by seven brigades; artillery was to be taken, and every soldier to carry a gun with forty rounds of ammunition. The significant password chosen was 'Victory or Death.'

Winter had set in so severely by now that the Hessians may well have felt secure against attack. Great blocks of ice were floating down the Delaware; in many places the stream was impassable. Snow was falling thickly everywhere,

and on Christmas evening a fierce storm of sleet and hail beat in the faces of the rebels as they marched. The snow was tinged with blood from the feet of the men whose shoes were broken; the pace could not be forced on that wild night: but Washington rode ever in front, encouraging his men with the words, 'Press on; press on, boys.'

The first shadows of cold dawn appeared as the rebels neared Trenton, and the Americans began to fear that the surprise attack had failed. And if Colonel Rall had read a warning note which had been conveyed to him on the previous afternoon by a loyalist; if he had listened to the advice of his own major, the Hessians would have been prepared; but Rall remarked that morning would be time enough, and he was still sleeping heavily when the attack began.

Within a few minutes all was confusion. The Americans were weary after a long night's march; but the Hessians were half asleep, and completely disconcerted by the surprise. Contradictory commands were issued by their leaders: the Germans rushed aimlessly through the back streets of the town. Some of the best shots in the American army were engaged in picking off the mercenaries one by one from the safe shelter of doors and windows. Meanwhile the place was still in semi-darkness; the smoke of the guns added to the difficulty of restoring order among the disorganised Hessians; and the sleet poured down steadily in blinding torrents.

'The hurry, fright, and confusion of the enemy,' wrote an American officer afterwards, 'was not unlike that which will be when the last trump shall sound. They endeavoured to form in the streets, the head of which we had previously the possession of with cannon and howitzers. These, in the twinkling of an eye, cleared the streets. The backs of the houses were resorted to for shelter. These proved ineffectual. The musketry soon dislodged them. Finally they were driven through the town into the open plains beyond.'

Hundreds of the Germans, unnerved by the surprise, had already fled from the dreadful din. Others who had fought bravely now perceived that they were trapped, for two of the American brigades, which had taken no part in the fighting, moved forward eager to join in the struggle. The Hessian officers saw that further resistance was useless, and laid down their arms. The battle of Trenton was over.

The Germans had lost over a hundred killed and wounded, as well as six cannon, a thousand muskets, and other accoutrements of war; but not one American was killed, and only four men—two officers and two privates—were wounded.

Seldom has a surprise been more complete or more successful: but the results of Trenton fight were not limited to the number of men or guns captured. The American troops had displayed a finer spirit on that wild winter night than during all the previous campaign; 'not a soul was found skulking; all were eager for battle.'

The warlike prowess of the Germans had been exaggerated by the fears of the Americans and by the remembrance of the great deeds of Frederick of Prussia; it was now proved that they were not invulnerable. And another daring attack a week later on the British lines at Princeton in New Jersey showed that, if the Americans could not yet venture an engagement with the main body of the enemy in open fight, they could at least attack isolated parties with singular success.

Month after month of the winter and early spring now passed slowly by, while Howe still remained inactive at New York; and each day marked a lost opportunity. 'His men,' remarked Washington, 'are well disciplined, well officered, and well appointed. Ours are raw militia, badly officered, and under no government. His numbers cannot, in any short time, be augmented. His situation with respect to horses and forage is bad, very bad, I believe. But will it be better? No; on the contrary, worse. With what propriety, then, can he miss so favourable

The Campaign of 1777.

an opportunity of striking a capital stroke against a city (Philadelphia) from which we derive so many advantages, which would give such *éclat* to his arms, and strike such a damp upon ours? . . . To expect that General Howe will not avail himself of our weak state is, I think, to say in so many words that he is unfit for the trust reposed in him.' The conduct of the campaign of 1777 proved even more conclusively than that of the previous year that he was, in fact, unfit for that trust.

The temporary success of Washington at Trenton and Princeton had justly elated the rebels; but their position was hardly less insecure at the beginning of the new year than it had been twelve months before. Howe was in command of at least twenty thousand men, and large numbers of marines from the British naval squadron at New York could have been added to his forces if necessary; the American commander-in-chief could muster but four thousand men of all classes and conditions to serve under him.

And though his activity was seldom greater than it was at this time, the incessant toils of the past eighteen months had told severely even on the iron constitution of Washington. He was now in very poor health; and so serious did his condition appear that his wife left the family home at Mount Vernon to join him; while on one occasion the commander-in-chief departed from his usual practice during a campaign, and received the sacrament—at the hands of a Presbyterian minister—as though to derive strength and comfort for the trials of the future from the spiritual mysteries of the Christian religion.

Had Howe attacked the rebel forces at that time nothing could have saved them from destruction. But the British general still stayed his hand; and as the health of Washington gradually returned, some other bright features lightened the prospects of the American cause. Most of the people of New Jersey had lost their love for the empire when the

empire's soldiers had plundered them of their goods; and since Washington had always been careful to punish any depredations which his own army might commit, those who had of late been loyalists soon began to volunteer for the rebel army. And many of the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, who had displayed a disposition to remain neutral during the quarrel until their own homes were in danger, now showed themselves definite adherents of the rebel side.

Some even among the pacific Quaker congregations so far deserted their principles as to become recruits, while those whose consciences were less pliable rendered passive, but none the less valuable assistance by giving the metal from their windows, their water-spouts, and their ornaments to melt into bullets. And the more active adherents of the rebel cause showed their zeal by stripping the roofs and carrying off the cisterns of such loyalists as still remained in the neighbourhood.

But in spite of every exertion, the forces under Washington were still in no condition to resist a superior army when Howe at length took the field on 13th June 1777. The British soldiers, on the other hand, who had been depressed by the paltering of the previous summer and by a long winter of monotony, were now eager for battle; but Howe did not even yet indulge their desire.

Instead of risking—and his superiority was so great that the risk would have been small—a general and decisive engagement, he first marched as far inland as Middlebrook; and then, suddenly changing his plans, he returned to the sea, closely pursued by the Americans, who were good for a dogged pursuit if not for a pitched battle; and by the end of July the British army had debarked on the Atlantic.

A few days later it reappeared at the mouth of the Delaware with the evident intention of sailing up that river to attack Philadelphia; but Howe remained no longer than a day in that position before again altering his plans. Fleet

and army once more made their way out to sea; and for some days the middle colonies were free of the invader. A fortnight later Howe again reappeared in Chesapeake Bay.

These astonishing proceedings completely mystified Washington; but there was good reason for his amazement. It is not probable that any soldier, with any pretence to a knowledge of the art of war, in command of a force greatly superior to that of the enemy, and operating in a country which presented no insuperable difficulties, had ever before pursued such vacillating and dilatory tactics as did Howe for those two months in the summer of 1777, during which he hesitated to attack Philadelphia.

The Chesapeake offered by no means so easy or so direct an approach to Philadelphia as the Delaware. But the British commander had at length determined his route and his method; and in strange contrast to his previous indecision, on this march Howe proved himself once more the able leader that he had been before Bunker's Hill. He soon caught up the American troops; and on 10th September, in the battle of Brandywine Creek—the Brandywine is a small river which is crossed by the main road from the south to Philadelphia—the rebels found themselves in a dangerous position between the advancing British lines of Howe and Cornwallis.

Brandywine Creek, 1777.

After a sharp contest, Washington was compelled to draw off his troops; and although some six hundred English and German soldiers had been killed, the colonists left more than a thousand men and eleven cannon on the field. A few days later a detachment of Americans was surprised and again defeated at the village of Paoli. The road to Philadelphia was now clear.

Less than a fortnight's marching brought the British troops to the Pennsylvanian capital, which was entered on 26th September. 'Every face' within that city, we are told, 'looked wild and pale with fear and amazement, and quite

overwhelmed with distress.' Many of the inhabitants fled from the place, some on account of their principles, others on account of their fears: but their alarm was needless. During the whole of its stay in Philadelphia, the British army behaved in exemplary fashion; and though the quiet Quakers of the district, who hated anything that conflicted with their love of peace, were moved to protest against the 'spirit of dissipation, levity, and profaneness which sorrowfully has spread, and is spreading, principally promoted by the military,' yet the soldiers soon found many admirers and friends among the less orthodox and more light-hearted. Howe's passing fit of activity was quickly over; and within a few weeks it was evident that the winter of 1777-8 was to be passed at ease in Philadelphia, as the previous winter had been passed at ease in New York. The British general's methods of warfare made a campaign seem like a picnic, and a winter like a carnival. But it was not for such amusements that the enemy had taken the field. . . .

The British occupy Philadelphia, 1777.

The Pennsylvanian capital had never before known so gay a season. The months passed happily enough with a round of dances, balls, and masques; there was no thought of renewing the war until the spring came: and although Washington had made a last daring attack on Germantown —a suburb of Philadelphia which owed its name to the nationality of its original settlers—it was known that the American commander-in-chief was in no condition to resume hostilities.

All through that winter, indeed, the situation of the rebel forces was desperate to the last degree; and the memory of the camp at Valley Forge, and the hardships which the American soldiers suffered through month after month of bitter cold and hunger, has never been forgotten by a nation which is seldom ungrateful to those who have served it.

The American Camp at Valley Forge.

The American Congress, or such delegates as still attended that somewhat disorganised assembly, continued to nurse a grudge against Washington, to listen to intriguers who hoped to depose him, and to deprive his troops of the supplies and comforts without which they could hardly maintain life. The baseness of their conduct called forth indignant protests from every officer who saw its evil results written only too plainly in the pinched and starving faces of the troops. 'Fire-cake and water for breakfast!' wrote one, 'Fire-cake and water for dinner! Fire-cake and water for supper! The Lord send that our commissary for purchases may live on fire-cake and water!' Another noticed that 'the whole army was sick and crawling with vermin'; and on this point a medical eye-witness gave emphatic testimony. 'We lost,' said an army physician, 'from ten to twenty (men) of camp diseases for one by weapons of the enemy.'

During this evil time Washington was one day discovered in secret prayer while the tears rolled down his cheeks; but neither prayer nor more mundane forms of persuasion moved the members of Congress. 'For want of blankets,' declared the commander-in-chief, 'the men were obliged to sit up all night by fires. . . . Soap, vinegar, and other articles allowed by Congress we see none of, nor have we seen them, I believe, since the battle of Brandywine. The first, indeed, we have little occasion for, few men having more than one shirt, many only the moiety of one, and some none at all.'[1]

It is an ugly story, and one which has cast a shadow over the reputation of every politician connected with the desertion of the commander-in-chief in the hour of his great need. Left to himself, Washington made such poor provision for his troops as he might; and those who stayed with him through that long winter, and survived its rigours, were not the men to desert a cause for which they had suffered so

[1] Letter from the camp at Valley Forge, 23rd December 1777.

much. But there could be no surprise attack that Christmas, no repetition of Trenton, no brilliant success to attract fresh recruits who should fill the many vacant places in the rebel army. The utmost that Washington could do was to maintain his position.

But if the American politicians, by starving the rebel forces in the middle colonies, had proved far worse enemies of the independence of their country than General Howe, a great and unexpected success in another quarter had already freed New England and the northern colonies from further danger. The surrender of the British army at Saratoga, on 17th October 1777, was the first great disaster that befell the royal troops during the war.

Saratoga, 1777.

The British plan of campaign for 1777 had arranged for two distinct movements. The first of these, the capture of Philadelphia, had been successfully, if slowly, carried out by Howe. The second, which contemplated the occupation of the long straight line of Lake Champlain and the Hudson River, would have isolated New England from the other colonies; and, having done that, the conquest of the whole district which was thus cut off from Washington and what may be called the American regular army should have presented no very grave difficulties. The execution of the plan, which was not unskilfully devised, was entrusted to General Burgoyne.

That versatile soldier had gained some considerable reputation in England. He was well known as a witty man about town, who was a favourite in the best London society; a member of parliament, he gave the House of Commons as much or as little of his time as was deemed necessary in an age that did not exact heavy labours from its legislators. As a dramatist he succeeded in writing a play which extorted admiration even from his enemies; as a soldier, the bombastic style of his despatches forced a smile even from his friends. But in the qualities more relevant to his profession, General

Burgoyne was far from lacking. His troops respected the soldier while they loved the man; for the affection which Burgoyne gained wherever he went was not obtained, like that of more laboured if less apt exponents of the art of popularity, at the expense of discipline.[1] Burgoyne, in fact, was a good soldier of the second rank. An excellent subordinate, he proved unequal to a great command; it was the misfortune of Britain to possess many such men, and not one first-rate military leader, in this war.

The army which Burgoyne now commanded was a compact and well-trained force of some four thousand men. Most of them were British; a few were Germans: and there was in addition a guerilla force of five hundred redskins. The latter were engaged at the direct instance of the British Government; but their employment was at once a military mistake and a social crime. Their lack of discipline was a perpetual trouble to Burgoyne; their cruelty, and their love of outrage and plunder, which was proverbial in every farmhouse from New Hampshire to Georgia, rendered them peculiarly hateful to the colonists. And their inclusion in the British ranks showed that the Imperial Government would shrink from no measures, however barbarous or impolitic, to reduce the revolted colonies to obedience.

The track of the redskins during this campaign was marked by insubordination, by scalping, and by even worse excesses; and the employment of such aid well merited the severe but not exaggerated language in which Washington condemned the deed. The British, he wrote, had proved themselves 'an enemy who, not content with hiring mercenaries to lay waste the country, have now brought savages, with the avowed and expressed intention of adding murder to desolation.' It was bad enough for an Englishman to hire foreigners

[1] Burgoyne was a Tory; and he was accused by Junius, a virulent opponent of the Tory ministry, of sharp practice at cards. The taunt may now be well dismissed as an extreme and not very creditable example of party malice.

to fight against the English overseas ; to employ barbarians to subdue a civilised foe was unpardonable.

In its earlier stages the campaign of Burgoyne was completely successful. Lake Champlain was reached without difficulty ; and when the British pressed forward to the south, the rebels were in no condition to repel them. And the general in charge of the American forces in the north, a New Englander named Horatio Gates, was a soldier of the type who is more at home in the backwaters of political intrigue than in the field ; at the very time when Burgoyne was advancing towards the Hudson, Gates was concerned in bringing his personal claim to the chief command of all the American forces before the attention of Congress.

The rebel garrison at Ticonderoga, which had been fed on 'nothing but flour and bad beef, with no beds or bedding for the sick to lie on or under, other than their own clothes,' was in a deplorable state ; and though that fortress had been fortified until it was believed to be impregnable, it had to be hastily abandoned in the dead of night by the Americans when the British appeared.

The road now seemed clear for Burgoyne's advance, and his success appeared assured. But not every American commander was as selfishly remiss as Horatio Gates. General Schuyler was a more loyal son of the infant republic ; and though his forces were too weak to risk a battle, he contrived to break up the roads and to destroy the bridges along and across which the British must march to the south. So successful was his work that it took Burgoyne fifty days to march seventy miles through a wild country of swamp and morass, which was difficult enough for infantry, but almost impassable for cavalry. Every bridge that was pulled down had to be reconstructed before the royal troops could pass ; and in at least one place Burgoyne was forced to build a causeway of logs over a morass two miles wide—an operation which retarded his advance for several days.

The delay served its purpose, for it gave the farmers of New England time to assemble for the defence of the Hudson; and once they had met to dispute Burgoyne's advance, the misfortunes of the British began. Five hundred of the German mercenaries were captured when seeking supplies at Bennington. The light troops and cavalry which were marching to the aid of the royal commander from Canada were forced to return home. It proved impossible to establish communications with Howe: 'I have spared,' reported Burgoyne, 'no pains to open a correspondence with Sir William Howe. I have employed the most enterprising characters, and offered very promising rewards; but of ten messengers sent at different times, and by different routes, not one is returned to me, and I am in total ignorance of the situation or intentions of that general.'[1]

With such ominous signs of failure confronting him, Burgoyne moved slowly forward towards the town of Albany, which was then, as now, an important post on the upper waters of the Hudson. The royal forces halted at Bemis Heights, within a few miles of Albany; and had Gates alone been responsible, their progress would hardly have been stayed at that point. But they were attacked with such fury by the Americans under the dashing Benedict Arnold that they were forced to retreat to Saratoga: and at that village the British came to a standstill.

To advance was now impossible, since the country to the south was almost unknown, and was infested, moreover, with the enemy. No junction could therefore be effected with Howe, who was already ensconced in comfortable winter quarters at Philadelphia. To retreat would be not only a confession of failure, but hardly less dangerous than to advance; for the American soldiers were never more happy or more successful than when harassing a retiring army. Yet

[1] In this matter Howe was much to blame for his indifference to the position of Burgoyne.

to stay at Saratoga was out of the question, for provisions had run short, and there was no opportunity of replenishing them in a bitterly hostile country.

Within two months Burgoyne's army had descended from the prospects of a brilliant success to the dull expectation of hopeless failure; but Burgoyne accepted a disaster for which he could not fairly be held responsible with the fortitude of a brave man. He remarked quietly that his army had evidently been intended to be hazarded, and that circumstances had now arisen which might require it to be devoted.

He prepared his troops for an attack, knowing full well that they were aware of the hopelessness of the situation: 'the utmost that the officers give me to hope,' he reported, 'was that they would fight if attacked. The Germans fell short of that. It was notorious that they meant to have given one fire, and then have clubbed their arms.'

A few hours more and the royal army was surrounded. To have fought their way back to the north through the rebel force would have been useless, for they would have been dogged through the whole retreat by the Americans, who were at once more mobile and better acquainted with the country than the British. A council of war was held to consider the situation; and it was decided that it would be wise 'to save to the king his troops by a thoroughly honourable capitulation.'

Negotiations were opened with the enemy. Gates demanded unconditional surrender—a stipulation so ungenerous that it was at once rejected by Burgoyne. But when Gates realised that the British would fight to the death and accept no quarter rather than submit to dishonourable terms, he gave way; and on the following morning it was agreed that the royal army should surrender with all the honours of war, and be granted a free passage to Great Britain from Boston, on condition of not serving again in America during the war.

The defeated army was treated, as Burgoyne admitted to Howe, with 'extraordinary generosity'; but the unhappy sequel to the Convention of Saratoga cast a shadow over the reputation of the American Congress for good faith with the enemy, as its treatment of Washington had already sullied its reputation for fair dealing with its friends. It was realised that when the British prisoners of war returned to England, they would take the place of those soldiers who were now guarding the British home dominions; and since these latter would therefore become available for service in America, the whole result of the victory would be thrown away. The final terms which Gates had granted were thus as much too generous as his original terms had been too severe: but the fact that the rebels were burdened with a general who was as foolish as he was vainglorious was no sufficient reason for Congress to break a bond which is always rightly considered as one of the most sacred of national obligations. Yet quibble after quibble was raised on the American side; protest after protest from the British was ignored. The prisoners were retained on American soil; and some temporary advantage was gained by the republic, at the expense of a permanent slur on its good name.[1]

Changed Aspect of the War, 1777-82.

But after the surrender at Saratoga the civil war took on an entirely different aspect. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that before the defeat of Burgoyne there was never a time when the Americans seemed likely to win; after his defeat there were few moments when they appeared likely to lose. Hitherto they had acted mainly on the defensive: they had dogged the steps of the British, they had attacked them unawares, but they had not been able to venture on a pitched battle. Henceforth they were more confident; and their confidence was fully

[1] It is hardly necessary to state that American publicists and historians have unanimously condemned the violation of the Convention of Saragota; but a belated repentance is less valid in politics than it is said to be in theology.

justified: for from that time the royal army was always heavily handicapped.

The critical event of the war had in fact been decided; and it is one of the many ironies of the struggle that the chief honour and the central episode of an eight years' combat fell, not to the great leader of the American armies, but to an incompetent and none too loyal subordinate.

The immediate effect of the British defeat at Saratoga was that the northern colonies were freed from the danger of invasion. No real effort was made to reduce New England during the remainder of the war; even Pennsylvania was soon afterwards evacuated by the royal army. Early in the summer of 1778, General Clinton superseded the slothful Howe at Philadelphia; and the first move of the new commander was to transfer his troops and his headquarters to New York.

The act may have been wise or unwise, but it savoured of a retreat; yet on 28th June Clinton halted at Monmouth Court House to fight an action with the Americans, who were harassing his march as they had harassed that of Howe. The excessive caution, if not the actual treachery of the republican General Lee avoided an action, and the British reached New York without either victory or defeat.

Other indecisive engagements were fought between scattered detachments of loyalists and rebels in various parts of the southern and western colonies, and the war in Georgia and the Carolinas degenerated into a mere excuse for plunder and destruction: but the year 1778 drew to a close without any military event of importance having occurred in the United States.

A far more important result of the battle of Saratoga, however, than even the practical abandonment of the northern colonies by the royal army, lay in the fact that that victory had at last secured the Americans an European ally. The Spanish court had for some time given assistance to the men

who had revolted from allegiance to an old enemy; the French Government, glad of any chance of embarrassing Britain, had secretly sent over supplies, powder, and shot to the American rebels. But although the latter had thus gained a friend after their diplomatic agents had made many a weary and unsuccessful pilgrimage to the capitals of the old world, there was no chance of obtaining an active alliance with a great European power until the young republic had proved the power of its arms in the field. The quick military eye of Frederick the Great of Prussia had, indeed, been impressed by the pertinacity and the good generalship of Washington; but Frederick was not the man to risk a war with Britain for the sake of any possible benefit which he might thereby confer on a cause for which he had no inherent affection. And in any event his support would probably have been of little practical value to the Americans.

Alliance of France and the United States, 1778.

But with France the case was very different. The French Government had, it is true, no particular love for liberty either in its abstract or its concrete form. But they had a thoroughly sincere desire to reduce the power of the British Empire; and with that object in view they had long coquetted with Benjamin Franklin, the agent of the United States in Paris. They had watched the course of the war with close interest; and while they were doubtful for some time of the ultimate success of the rebels, their inclinations frequently led them nearly to overstep the uncertain bounds of international neutrality.

The news of Saratoga, however, decided them definitely to espouse the American cause. No further proof was deemed necessary that the downfall of the British Empire was at hand; and on 6th February 1778, two treaties of commerce, amity, and alliance were entered into between France and the United States. By renouncing all intention of reconquering Canada the French removed the only objection that could

have been urged against them in America [1]; the rebels, on their side, bound themselves by no condition save that they would never purchase peace by submitting to Britain.

An alliance of this comprehensive character was practically equivalent to a declaration of hostilities by France upon Britain; and within a short time the two countries were at war. The danger to England was now urgent, for she had to defend herself at home, to protect her commerce on the high seas, and to safeguard her possessions in India, as well as to prosecute the war in America; but the conflict with France was nevertheless far more popular than the war with the United States had been of late. 'The approaching war with France had rather done the ministers good than harm,' confessed Horace Walpole, an inveterate opponent of Lord North's government [2]; and whereas the historian Gibbon, then a member of the House of Commons, had admitted after Saratoga that 'if it had not been for shame there were not twenty men in the House but were ready to vote for peace,' there were now few who were not anxious to avenge the British disasters in America by a series of victories over the French.

War between France and Britain, 1778.

The circle of Britain's enemies was soon still further enlarged. War with Spain broke out in June 1779; in the following year the Armed Neutrality of Russia, Denmark, and Sweden, which was subsequently joined by Holland, threw into the adverse balance every European power save Prussia. At no time in her history has England been threatened with a stronger combination of foes; yet with an obstinacy worthy of a better cause, the king was still bent on the reduction of his revolted subjects.

The European Powers unite against Britain, 1779-80.

[1] Any possible American objection to an alliance with foreigners against the nation which had given them birth had long since been removed by the fact that the British had employed German mercenaries and redskins against the rebels.

[2] The *Last Journals of Horace Walpole*, 18th March 1788.

An attempt to conciliate the Americans had already come to nothing. Shortly after the battle of Saratoga, Lord North had proposed to abandon the right of search, and to give up the whole of the matters in dispute with the colonies; but the commissioners charged with the negotiation were at once met with the demand that the Declaration of Independence which had been issued on 4th July 1776 should be recognised as a preliminary of peace. The belated project therefore failed: another four years of useless war were to elapse, and further disasters were to overtake the British arms, before the proud head of England bowed to the loss of her possessions.

Attempted Conciliation of the United States, 1778.

The war with France was chequered with mingled triumphs and disasters at sea; the civil war in America continued with but little change. England had already lost faith in generals who could not conquer and commanders who seemed unable to fight a decisive action; the British officers stationed in the United States were lampooned at home,[1] and on the scene of war they still met with small success.

The Civil War continues, 1778-80.

But the struggle became more embittered as it receded

[1] The poet of the London *Evening Post* produced the following verses:—

'Gage nothing did, and went to pot;
Howe lost one town, another got;
Guy nothing lost, and nothing won;
Dunmore was homewards forced to run.
Clinton was beat, and got a garter,
And bouncing Burgoyne got a Tartar:
Thus all we gained for millions spent
Is to be laughed at, and repent.'

Guy was Guy Carleton, who was somewhat unjustly treated in this effusion.

Another writer held similar opinions:—

'First General Gage commenced the war in vain;
Next General Howe continued the campaign.
Then General Burgoyne took the field; and last,
Our forlorn hope depends on General Fast.'

A day of general prayer and fasting had been proclaimed in England. It proved no more effective than such measures usually are.

into the backwoods and those sparsely-settled districts of the interior where the redskins rendered evil assistance to the royal forces ; and a great part of the American army was now directed to the conquest of the West. Ohio and Wyoming fell before the republican troops in 1778 after much desultory fighting and several severe encounters with the natives ; but the claim of the Americans to the territories which had been transferred to Canada under the Quebec Act fourteen years before was thus made good.

The results of these campaigns were, therefore, as important to the United States as the victory of Wolfe at Quebec had been to Canada : the opportunity of expansion westwards, which was essential to the wellbeing of the young republic, was now secured.

The last stage of the civil war had at last been entered upon. The northern colonies had long been abandoned by the British. The middle colonies, with the exception of New York, were also destitute of the royal troops. The south alone seemed to offer some chance of success to the imperial cause. A strong loyalist feeling yet survived in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia ; the country, too, in some ways presented opportunities for military operations that had been lacking in the more thickly populated districts further north.

The War in the South, 1780-2.

The latter consideration, it is true, was a double-edged one ; but for the first time in the war the British generals proved themselves possessed of some activity if not of actual genius.

The campaign of 1780 opened with an attempt by Clinton on Charleston, the chief city and seaport of South Carolina. That stronghold, which had hitherto been considered impregnable, fell before a cleverly planned attack on 12th May ; and after this success Lord Cornwallis, now commanding the royal troops in the south, executed a series of vigorous and daring moves in the interior. His American opponent, the

self-taught General Nathanael Greene, who had already shown himself inferior to none but Washington among the soldiers of the republic, proved a worthy foe : but no decisive battles were fought, and the operations of the year closed without either side gaining any effective advantage.

But, meanwhile, the conduct of the war had been sullied by the defection and treason of Benedict Arnold. That most adventurous and daring of all the republican generals, to whom the real credit of the victory at Saratoga and many less important encounters was rightly ascribed by his admiring countrymen, had been placed in command of the American forces at West Point on the Hudson. An extravagant wife at Philadelphia was the excuse or the reason for his plunging into debt ; but no excuse availed him when accused of converting public funds to his private ends. Arnold was tried and convicted by court-martial, but not deprived of his rank or office ; yet the disgrace embittered him and determined him to seek revenge.

Treason of Benedict Arnold, 1780.

He agreed to betray West Point to the British : the plot miscarried, but Arnold managed to make good his escape, and, after spending some time with the royal troops in America, he retired to England. He was received with honour by the king and government ; the general public, with finer instinct, despised the traitor.[1]

In the following year the war in the south continued with little change. Cornwallis discovered that the co-operation of the loyalists was not to be depended on ; while, outside the regular forces, private feuds and local animosities were pursued with ardour and even with animosity. Plunder and rapine were the undisguised objects of many a raid ; the proverbial bitterness of a civil war was increased by lawless methods reminiscent of a border foray in the Middle Ages.

The Last Campaign—Yorktown, 1781.

[1] *Last Journals of Horace Walpole*, 20th January 1782.

A stubborn battle was fought at Guildford Court House between Cornwallis and Greene on 5th February. Both sides claimed the victory: but while the Americans were forced to retreat from the field, the British loss was so heavy that they could not have risked another trial of strength.

The end was now near. After a summer spent in indecisive marches and counter-marches, Cornwallis entrenched himself in September at Yorktown, between the York and James Rivers, to await reinforcements from Clinton at New York.

But those reinforcements did not arrive until it was too late. For a few decisive weeks the French obtained command of the sea: Clinton was unable to send the troops which he had promised, and Cornwallis was speedily surrounded by a mixed French and American army. A first attack on the royal troops at Yorktown was made on 11th October: but although this was beaten off, although Cornwallis inflicted some damage on the enemy by a desperate sortie, although he attempted to escape by water, his situation became more difficult day by day.

His men were weakened by disease and privation: his fortifications were destroyed by the overwhelming fire of the enemy: and, on 19th October 1781, he was forced to capitulate. Five days afterwards the British fleet arrived—a week too late.

The war was now practically over. Even a temporary loss of the command of the sea was fatal to an empire whose defence rested primarily upon the maintenance of its maritime supremacy; and although it is probable that nothing would now have availed to restore the American colonies to Britain, yet the final disaster of the conflict between mother and daughter states was not precipitated until the moment when the former was for a time deprived of her predominance on the high seas.

The last blow to the unity of the British Empire was struck at Yorktown, near the James River, on 19th October 1781.

By a strange coincidence, the first permanent outpost of that empire in America had been established nearly two centuries before at Jamestown, a few miles distant on the James River, in May 1607. The same stream witnessed the beginning and the end of an epoch.

The United States independent, 1783.

With the surrender at Yorktown the tragedy of the conflict between empire and liberty drew rapidly to a close. Charleston and Savannah were evacuated by the royal troops: New York was the only important position which remained in British hands. Almost everybody in England, except the king, now admitted that the war was hopeless[1]; but while George III. still wished to prolong a useless struggle, his ministers and the people as a whole were sick of it. And the Tory administration of Lord North, an administration which had survived twelve years of mistakes and disasters, an administration which has become proverbial as the worst British Government since the misrule of the Stuarts,[2] was at length evicted from office. For some time the colleagues of the premier had frequently disagreed among themselves; but after the defeat of Cornwallis the divisions in their ranks became more acute, and culminated in the resignation of Lord North on 20th March 1782.

The few months during which the Rockingham and Shelburne ministries that succeeded the fall of North survived their appointment proved the Whigs as ineffective in office as in opposition; but, under a coalition government headed by the Duke of Portland, the negotiations for peace, which had been begun at Paris early in the year 1782, were brought to a successful issue. On 30th November of that year a provisional agreement was signed; nine months later, on

[1] 'The defeat of Lord Cornwallis had rendered the American war hopeless; yet the king was not in the least more inclined to give it up.' —*Last Journals of Horace Walpole*, January 1782.

[2] The one useful measure of the North ministry was the Quebec Act of 1774; but even that was not an unmixed benefit.

3rd September 1783, the formal Treaty of Versailles was concluded.

Britain had been unfortunate during the war with her colonies; she was equally unfortunate in the negotiations for peace. The American commissioners were Benjamin Franklin, an astute and able politician; John Adams, less talented but a clever lawyer, and a future President of the United States; and John Jay, who subsequently rose to high legal office under the republic. The British commissioner was an ignorant and foolish man named Richard Oswald, who was already on friendly terms with Franklin; and apart from the fatuous manner in which he would have conceded the American demands on all points, the British were hampered by a double difficulty.

In the first place, they were the losers in the civil war; and the losing party is necessarily placed at a disadvantage in diplomacy. In the second place, the Whigs, while in opposition, had always allied themselves with the American cause, to the disgust of many whose patriotism was of stronger or narrower texture; and that attitude now rendered their position as the official negotiators of peace a somewhat delicate one.

The British were fully prepared to recognise the independence of the United States as the preliminary basis of peace. They could, in fact, do nothing else; but having done so, they had nothing left with which to negotiate. The first demand of the Americans was for the cession of Canada and Nova Scotia; but when this was indignantly rejected by the imperial authorities—although Oswald would have approved it—the British gave way on the question of the boundaries between the United States and Canada; and a provision in the treaty relating to the settlement and fisheries of Newfoundland sowed the seeds of much future trouble and friction.[1]

A more difficult question, however, concerned the treat-

[1] See bk. xi. ch. i.

ment of that considerable number of Americans who had remained loyal to the Crown. They had borne much persecution during the war. It was certain that they would be subjected to still further ill-treatment after the conclusion of peace; and the British Government displayed an honourable anxiety to protect, by every means in their power, the interests of those who had been faithful to them. But in this direction the commissioners for the United States confessed themselves powerless to intervene. They represented Congress, and not the individual states or colonies; and Congress had no power to dictate to the various states of the Union as to their action in their own internal affairs.

At length it was agreed that creditors on either side should meet with no lawful impediment to the recovery of the full value in sterling money of all *bona-fide* debts; also, that Congress should earnestly recommend to the State Legislatures to provide for the restitution of the property of British subjects which had been confiscated; also that there should be no further confiscations or prosecutions by reason of the part taken by the loyalists in the war.

These provisions were, for the most part, utterly without effect. The 'earnest recommendation' of Congress received no attention whatever from the State Legislatures, which passed laws confiscating the property and banishing the persons of the loyalists; and although the more moderate and far-seeing men in the United States protested against such ungenerous treatment of their political opponents, they protested in vain. A genuine difficulty existed in the fact that no constitution had yet been drawn up, and that, therefore, each state was entirely independent of its neighbours or of outside interference; and, unfortunately, the passions which are inevitably engendered in a civil conflict were now given full play. They resulted in the abandonment of the United States by the sturdy body of men who have become known in history as the United Empire Loyalists, whose

emigration proved a serious loss to the republic and an important gain to the empire at large.

But this was a mere by-product, a secondary and later result, of the Imperial Civil War. The real importance of the struggle, which ended with the Treaty of Versailles in 1783, lay in the fact that it irrevocably shattered the political unity of the English people; and that fact, although none suspected it at the time, was to alter the whole future of the world's history.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: 1776-1801[1]

So common a thing as the birth of a child is an event of vast potential significance. The fretful helpless human atom,

[1] Authorities.—Again the materials are almost overwhelming. For a general historical view, Bancroft, who writes, as usual, with enthusiasm and prejudice; Fiske's *American Revolution* is more impartial; Justin Winsor; the *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States* (edited under the direction of Congress by Francis Wharton) is of interest as showing the foreign relations of the republic. The *Journals of the American Congress*, 1774 to 1788. The *Federalist*, the political classic of the period. Many of the minor political works are mentioned in Tyler's *Literary History of the American Revolution*. Of more biographical interest are the following works concerning the founders of the United States. The *Works* of John Adams, containing his life, diary, and autobiography; also the *Familiar Letters* of John Adams and his wife. The *Memoirs* of John Quincy Adams, containing his important diary. The *Life and Services of Samuel Adams*, by W. V. Wells. The collected *Works* of Benjamin Franklin. The *Works* of Alexander Hamilton, to which may be added a brilliant but not impartial essay by F. S. Oliver. The *Life and Speeches of Patrick Henry*, by W. W. Henry. The *Writings of T. Jefferson*, edited by H. A. Washington. Madison's *Papers*, of great value. The *Life of Thomas Paine*, by M. D. Conway. The *Writings* of Washington, by Sparks, and the *Life* by W. Irving. For the American Constitution, the exhaustive work by James Bryce and Story's *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*, and, of less importance, *The Law of the Federal and State Constitutions of the United States*, by F. J. Stimson. I have reserved the discussion of the social changes introduced by secession for a later volume.

whose body is yet almost as embryonic as its soul, may have a career that will change the destiny of millions of its fellows ; more commonly it will rest satisfied if it build up some little competency of its own. It may lead a nation to some stupendous earthly victory, or drag an empire down through too great ambition to the hopeless despair of irretrievable disaster ; it may inspire a continent with a new belief, or lead whole generations of mankind astray with the wayward, distorted lights of an outworn creed.

Probably it will do none of these things : yet even though it stay contentedly in the rut of commonplace convention, its life cannot be wholly without significance. Its very presence there must deepen the rut ; it will add its atom of weight unknowingly to the tendencies of an age, as the coral insect adds its minute body to the reef that in time will form an island. And as the coral island that emerges may wreck the greatest ship that floats, even so the conventions of an epoch, whose sum we call the spirit of the time, may wreck the saviour of a universe.

Yet the birth of a nation is greater than the birth of a child by so much more than the sum of all its human units ; for the sum of their conscious aspirations will create an additional soul—the soul of a nation to which each human soul-unit will contribute its iota of thought or deed, of help or hindrance, of truth or falsehood.

But a nation may be precipitated into being before its time by some dread catastrophe ; it may be held long ages in the womb, and survive but an hour till it fall the prey of some stronger neighbour ; or it may conquer its very conquerors by sheer force of intellectual will, as the Greeks conquered the Romans who reduced them to a province of their outer empire.

It may succeed, and the influence of its thought or its arms will spread throughout the world ; it may fail, like the human unit, and its name and reputation be lost for ever,

trodden down beneath the hurrying feet of those men and women whose little schemes of love and hate, and mutual interests or opposed desires, are building up unwittingly the communities of the future.

Yet in this, at least, it differs from the human type which is its germ. For the human life has limits which may not be overstepped ; but the nation may be perpetually renewed, and its life-blood course as quick and fresh in its thousandth year as in the youth of its earlier centuries. It may change, but it need not die.

It is the destiny of some nations to exert a profound influence upon their neighbours ; but Britain has not been one of these. Her insular position cuts her off from Europe ; the unresponsive, unimaginative character of her people cuts them off from all but the most powerful of the currents of thought which influence the countries of the Continent. Self-reliant, obstinate, and proud, England has understood her neighbours as little as they have understood her ; in neither case was there any sense of a possible loss, or any feeling that some profitable communion might be feasible between those who were strangers in tongue and in customs, in social habits and in political institutions.

The true destiny of Britain was other than this. She was not to influence nations but to found them ; she was to propagate by direct descent, not by collateral persuasion. Yet though she had established great and flourishing settlements abroad, she had not understood her mission. She had sown a colony and reaped a nation ; but she knew it not. And the first nation of the English people overseas was born of an unwilling mother after years of painful labour. Her later children, the imperial dominions which form the oversea nations of to-day, have been tended with some care ; the firstborn, like the unwelcome son of Hagar, went forth to live or die as it might or could.

The New English Nation.

The act of enforced parturition weakened the mother,

yet nourishment was still afforded to the offspring : thousands of hardy English emigrants still crossed the Atlantic year by year to the independent territories in the West ; and the citizens of the new republic were mainly drawn from the subjects of that older kingdom from which the republic itself had sprung. If the United States were no longer a part of the British Empire, they were still a part of the English people : the states of the American Union, as Edward Gibbon Wakefield remarked with truth half a century later, were ' in one sense of the word still colonies of England.'

A change of government cannot change a people, although it may modify profoundly the conditions of their development ; but in the end it will probably influence them less than the constant operation through several generations of a different climate and a fresh environment.

It is the consciousness of this essential continuance of identity after the tragedy of the Imperial Civil War which forces one to regard the annals of the United States as not less a part of the history of the English people overseas than are the annals of any of the British colonies. A Greek colony in the Mediterranean was none the less Greek because it was independent. The Byzantine provinces of Rome were none the less Roman because the sovereign who ruled in the city of Constantine was independent of his fellow-monarch on the seven hills that overlook the Tiber. And the people of the United States were none the less English because they revolted from the empire under whose flag their forefathers had founded the early settlements in the western wilderness.

Often, indeed, there was friction and jealousy between the two great branches of the English race. Once there was a renewal of war ; at other times war was barely avoided by diplomacy. But certain fundamental facts went deeper than any political discord. The language of the Americans was the same, their mode of thought the same, as among the original stock in England. Old English statutes could still

be pleaded in the legal courts of the United States. And the constitution of the republic reflects in every line its political development from that of the older country.

There was, it is true, already a large foreign population in the United States at the birth of the nation. There was a colony of Dutch in New York, a colony of Swedes and Germans in Pennsylvania: these had not all changed their native tongue for that of England. And in later years a vast foreign population poured in from every country of Europe, anxious to fill up the fertile wastes of a republic which promised them wealth and liberty: these, too, clung fondly to their customs and their language. But in this the new nation resembled the old: for as the English people in England were no pure race, but a mingling of Saxon and Norman and Celtic blood, even so the English in America were no pure race. Within a century they possessed a strain derived from every white nation; but, despite some pessimistic prophecies, the English stock was still largely predominant.[1]

But the brooding love with which a woman guides and

[1] Of the first twenty-seven presidents of the United States, twenty-five were of distinctively English origin; two, Van Buren (1837) and Theodore Roosevelt (1901), were of Dutch New York extraction. The latter confessed on one occasion that 'he thanked God that he had not one drop of Anglo-Saxon blood in his veins' ('Reminiscences of John Hare,' *Strand Magazine*, September 1908); but many of the presidents, like thousands of their less conspicuous fellow-citizens, were proud to trace their ancestry back to the original family in England.

A writer in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, in October 1909, stated that German might easily have become the dominant language of the United States. The absurdity of the idea may be shown by the fact that at the revolution there was but one German newspaper in the country; the German population was at most a few thousands in Germantown, near Philadelphia, and in Georgia. The English population was about three millions. Apart from this, there is the notorious tendency of the Germans to forget their country and abandon their language when they cross the seas. As an illustration, I may mention a casual conversation I had with a youth when travelling between Cologne and Antwerp in October 1904. He was proud of being 'a born American'; but he alluded with some contempt to his own mother, who was sitting in the same carriage, as 'a mere German immigrant.' His fervent patriotism had usurped the place of the fifth commandment.

shields her child through the first tender years of its earlier growth was of necessity absent from the infancy of the United States. A rougher school was theirs; and the sternness of its methods left some marks, not all of them for good, on the thirteen colonies which fought their way to independence through civil war.

The issue of the Declaration of Independence on behalf of the 'thirteen united colonies of America' on 4th July 1776, was the decisive event which heralded the birth of the new English nation overseas. That remarkable document, which was at once a confession of political faith and a passionately exaggerated indictment of past misrule, ran as follows:—

The Declaration of Independence, 1776.

'When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organising its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

'He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only. He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures. He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people. He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within. He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalisation of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers. He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries. He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance. He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures. He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

'He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation: For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us: For protecting

them, by a mock Trial, from punishment, for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States: For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world: For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent: For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury: For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences: For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies: For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments: For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

'He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation. He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands. He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

'In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

'Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity.

We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

'We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.'

This lengthy indictment of British rule was the work of Thomas Jefferson, at that time a young man, thirty-three years of age, and a Virginian politician who was destined to take a leading part in American politics during the next half century. For the last six years he had been a member of the legislature of his colony; but a wider career now opened before him, which culminated in the foundation of the democratic party and a double term of office as president of the republic.

Its Author and Origin.

An ardent believer in democracy and an adherent of the new humanitarian school of thought which was gaining ground in all parts of the civilised world, Jefferson possessed some of the virtues of the philanthropist and most of the vices of the politician. He was ambitious of popularity and influence, which he had already acquired the art of obtaining from his fellow-men. His later actions showed that he was seldom scrupulous as to the methods which he employed to profit a friend or to blacken an opponent; and he demonstrated that secret intrigue was not less profitable in a free

republic than in the court of an absolute monarch. He had already proved himself one of the most determined opponents of the arbitrary action of Britain in the constitutional dispute; but it was only recently that he had become an advocate of secession.[1] Yet now that Jefferson had definitely joined the separatists, his actions showed all the zeal of the belated convert. The original draft which he prepared of the Declaration of Independence was modified before its publication by his less uncompromising colleagues; and from that time no man ever heard him express any but the most bitter sentiments of enmity towards Britain.

It is hardly necessary to comment on the distortions and inaccuracies which are contained in the clauses of the Declaration of Independence. It is true that the tyranny and perfidy of George III., so far from being almost unparalleled in the most barbarous ages, had been equalled and surpassed in every civilised country. It is obvious that the doctrine that 'all men are created equal,' and with the inalienable right of liberty, came with strange inconsistency from the representative of a slave-owning colony. Other counts of the indictment would have been susceptible of a very different interpretation in impartial hands.

But the unbiassed summary of a judge is out of place in the mouth of the fervent advocate; the first critical period of a civil war is no time for the careful balance of words and arguments.

The Declaration of Independence was not, as its unwise admirers have sometimes contended, a final summary of the principles of statesmanship. On its constructive side it was judiciously vague: it professed no policy save one of general

[1] See a private letter by Jefferson, dated 29th November 1775. 'There is not in the British Empire a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain than I do. But by the God that made me, I will cease to exist before I yield to a connection on such terms as the British Parliament proposes; and in this I think I speak the sentiments of America.'

benevolence and a belief in the rights of man, which is scarcely a sufficient or, as the experience of the young American republic quickly proved, a satisfactory guide in the conduct of national affairs. But it was an able *ex parte* statement of the case from the American side; it suited—and in this lay the peculiar political genius of which Jefferson invariably proved himself possessed—the times and the conditions more exactly, perhaps, than any other political manifesto has ever done[1]; and it succeeded, in so far as words can succeed in deciding so mighty an issue, in making the disruption of the empire inevitable.

The Movement towards Secession.

But the publication of this document was not determined on without prolonged and painful controversy, even after the civil war had been in progress over a year. It is no light thing for an individual person to break with the past and to risk the present for the sake of an uncertain future; for a whole people the decision is necessarily of infinitely greater gravity. A vast majority of the colonists had, indeed, been agreed in their hatred of the oppression which they had suffered during the last decade. Yet with few of them had irritation gone so far as to make them desire an actual separation from the mother country. They imputed their troubles to the misdeeds of the British Government in London; and a more liberal policy was legitimately anticipated from any change in the state of political parties at Westminster. But the Americans as a whole had still no wish for independence, even many months after the skirmish at Lexington had caused every rusty fowling-piece in New England to be placed at the service of the raw colonial troops.

Every stage of the gradual process by which the Atlantic states of the empire became convinced of the necessity of secession may, in fact, be easily traced, so far as the move-

[1] An exception might possibly be made in favour of the Athanasian creed.

ment was marked by definite public acts; and every public act was accompanied by much of that sober discussion among friends and neighbours in provincial township or on quiet country farm which eventually crystallised into the solid, unshakable conviction that separation was inevitable.

The first step was taken when committees of correspondence between the still disunited and mutually jealous colonies were organised by Samuel Adams in Massachusetts, and by Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson in Virginia.

A second and far more important step was taken when the first Continental Congress, which consisted of fifty-one delegates, representing all the colonies save Georgia, assembled in the Carpenter's Hall at Philadelphia on 5th September 1774, in response to the summons of the Massachusetts Legislature. The day had now come when the colonies visibly acknowledged a common interest in each other's welfare; the initial, and on that account perhaps the most difficult move had been made towards union.

The Continental Congresses, 1774-87.

Nor did the delegates deem themselves unworthy the occasion. 'Such an assembly,' wrote John Adams enthusiastically, 'never before came together on a sudden, in any part of the world. Here are fortunes, abilities, learning, eloquence, acuteness, equal to any I ever met with in my life. Here is a diversity of religions, manners, interests, such as it would seem impossible to unite in one plan of conduct.'

But though Patrick Henry, with characteristic impetuosity, strove to break down provincial distrust—'Where are your landmarks, your boundaries of colonies?' he cried. 'They are all thrown down; the distinctions are no more: I am not a Virginian, but an American'—the Congress as a whole inclined to moderation. The delegates, indeed, abated not one iota of the points in dispute with Britain. They entered into a non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation association. But they likewise prepared a loyal address

to the king; and in a message to the British people they openly proclaimed their loyalty. 'You have been told,' they said, 'that we are seditious, impatient of government, and desirous of independence. Be assured that these are not facts, but calumnies.' And at the conclusion of the session George Washington wrote that those who believed that Massachusetts was 'setting up for independency (were) grossly abused. . . . I am well satisfied that no such thing is desired by any thinking man in all North America.' [1]

The second Continental Congress assembled at Philadelphia on 10th May 1775, nominally in order to continue the voluntary functions of its predecessor. But the position was now very different from what it had been a few months before. Repressive laws against Massachusetts and its capital had been passed by the British Parliament; Gibbon had declared that the House of Commons would not hear even the archangel Gabriel on the subject of America. A chance encounter at Lexington had developed into civil war. The colonies were in open rebellion, and every effort was being made to expel the British troops.

Yet even at such a crisis, there were still very many who hoped for a reconciliation; Washington himself—who had heard the news of Lexington fight a few days previously in Virginia, as he stood talking quietly to Bryan Fairfax at the close of a mild April afternoon—had not abandoned the hope of a peaceful issue. And the steadfast loyalists were strong enough to pass through Congress another 'humble and

[1] The stricter loyalists, however, had no belief in the professions of Congress, as witness the following verses:—

'Imperial Rome from scoundrels rose;
Her grandeur's hailed in verse and prose;
Venice the dregs of sea compose.
So sprang the mighty Congress.

When insects vile emerge to light,
They take their short inglorious flight,
Then sink again to native night;
Fit emblem of the Congress.'

dutiful' petition to the king, praying him to use his veto to protect his American subjects from the repression of British Acts of Parliament.

This 'Olive Branch,' as it was called, proved that agreement was yet possible; but when it was answered by a royal proclamation against traitors and rebels, even the loyalists ceased to work for peace. The time had arrived when the king's true friends in America were powerless to protect him from the party of false 'king's friends' in England: such loyalty as had not been dissipated in the colonies by the proclamation now remained passive and quiescent. Not only was the country ripe for independence, said an impatient member of Congress, but it was in some danger of becoming rotten for want of it.

The king's answer to the Olive Branch went far to justify the extreme language of John Adams, who had condemned all further petitions as useless folly. For years, indeed, Adams had been almost alone in wishing for American independence. He now saw the erstwhile unpopular cause gain thousands of adherents every week; and while the conduct of the war by the British was hopelessly incompetent, one event after another soon rent the old fabric of kinsmanship in twain, as if with the frank design to leave no basis of affection or even of friendship upon which a future generation might build a new reconciliation. Seaport towns were destroyed by the British. Foreign troops and the cruel American aborigines were employed against the revolted colonists; and the fact that hired Germans and redskins fought with the English against the English overseas was never forgotten or forgiven.

Events now moved rapidly. Early in the year 1776 a pamphlet entitled *Common Sense* was published anonymously by Tom Paine, an English writer of equivocal reputation, which stated in simple but forcible language the arguments in favour of separation. One hundred and twenty thousand

copies were sold within three months; half a million were ultimately disposed of. Its influence was enormous; but the soil was well prepared for a seed which could grow so quickly. Thirty years previously *Common Sense* would have fallen dead from the press.

The movement grew in every province. The loyalists were disorganised and disunited: they had no programme; they could only hope to temporise, to delay the issue, to await concessions. But the time for delay was past; concessions never came. And meanwhile the advocates of rebellion placed the direct and by this time not unattractive alternative of slavery or independence before attentive and excited audiences.

Again the soil was well prepared. Thirty years previously the people would have laughed at the idea that the British Government wished to enslave them, and repudiated the suggestion that they desired independence. But the taxes and the army, the redskins and the mercenaries, had done their work effectually.

The representatives of the colonies in Congress, who had formerly resented the idea of secession, now swung slowly round in favour of independence. Even Pennsylvania, whose delegates had been instructed to 'dissent from and utterly reject any proposition that might cause, or lead to, a separation,' at last withdrew their objections.

If the representatives would not vote for the Declaration of Independence, they at least refrained from voting against it; and their action was significant of the change that had come over American opinion.

There yet remained, it is true, a large number, perhaps at first even a majority, of those whose attachment to the empire was ineradicable. Their loyalty survived both the oppression of the king and the oppression which the rebel leaders now brought to bear on those whose presence was rightly considered a source of weakness to the secessionist

cause: but henceforth their voices were mute. The separatists were supreme both in the general congress and in the provincial legislatures.[1]

The same Congress remained in session until the close of the civil war; but its functions were as peculiar as its powers were limited. It was not, remarked John Adams, either a legislative or a representative assembly; it was a diplomatic assembly. It sent representatives to the courts of Europe; but, save in the case of Benjamin Franklin, who was welcomed at Paris, both in the royal palace and in French society,[2] the record of the first ambassadors of the United States was inglorious in the extreme.

Difficulties and Weakness of the Congress.

Both they and the Congress which appointed them were utterly ignorant of diplomatic etiquette. The sovereigns to whom they were accredited refused to recognise the existence either of the United States or of its ministers. Their advances were rebuffed as those of rebels; and in some cases they were even requested to depart without delay from the countries which they had embarrassed by their unwelcome presence.

[1] In spite of Bishop Butler's 'things are what they are, and they will be what they will be,' things are not always what they might have been, in public affairs or in private. The great German critics hold that there is a moment of the last suspense in every drama, actual or invented, a moment in which the tragedy may yet turn to comedy or the comedy to tragedy; a moment when Hamlet may still marry Ophelia, Othello still remain unpersuaded of his wife's infidelity, and Shylock succeed in enforcing his bargain with Antonio. But once the decisive moment is over, the character of the play is fixed and constant; and it is the same in the longer drama of history, although the decisive moment is far less easy to determine. But there was a moment when Louis XVI. might still have retained his crown, when Charles I. might have avoided the open conflict with his parliament; there is a similar decisive moment in every revolution. In the case of the Imperial Civil War, I should be inclined to place it at the time when the rejection of the Olive Branch was announced in America.

[2] The French sympathised with the American revolt, but they doubted its success. Whenever they expressed their doubts to Franklin, he answered cheerfully, '*Ça ira, Ça ira.*' The expression caught on, and a few years afterwards became a catchword in the French Revolution.

The position was no less difficult at home than it was abroad. The members of Congress were, indeed, free to do anything they pleased ; but they lacked the power to carry out their wishes. The Congress was a voluntary association which possessed some influence but lacked all authority. It might advise, but it could not compel ; it might suggest, but it could not enforce.

The articles of confederation which it drew up in 1778 were, it is true, accepted by the various states. But the strength of those articles was reduced so much in discussion that they were practically worthless ; in any case they were not binding for a single day longer than was convenient to the legislatures of the states. Any of the thirteen revolted colonies could withdraw its delegates and repudiate Congress whenever it so desired, could make peace with Britain and declare war upon its neighbours on its own initiative : yet in such a case Congress would have been impotent to intervene, for it had neither inherent nor acquired authority over the separate and independent states.

In such circumstances the wonder is not that Congress made so many mistakes, but that it made so few. Its deficiencies were, indeed, obvious. It neglected the commissariat of the army. It attempted to dictate as to the conduct of the war. It intrigued as to the appointment of the officers. But among communities so jealous of constitutional authority as the English colonies in America had proved themselves, among people who were determined to maintain entire every provision of every charter of every state, a body whose existence was not recognised in any constitutional document whatever had need to walk warily ; and it says much for the sagacity of Congress that it was able to continue in existence through all the vicissitudes of a lengthy and frequently disastrous war.

The real crisis came when independence was secured in 1783. Hitherto the mere stress of conflict had made for

union; but once the tension of war was at an end, the reaction, which is inevitable after a prolonged struggle, was certain to revive the old jealousies between state and state. Those jealousies had been too deeply rooted in the colonies for the imperial government ever to succeed in uniting its oversea provinces, even though many of the colonists had themselves perceived the advantages of union; those jealousies might still prove too obstinate for the new nation to surmount. In order to preserve their internal independence, the colonies had split an empire which they had always regarded with affection. It was conceivable that they might for the same reason destroy the one visible symbol of union in the commonwealth which they had themselves so recently created, should it presume to interfere with the sovereign rights of each or any of the thirteen states.

The Crisis of Peace, 1783-9.

The situation was, therefore, one of extreme delicacy and tension. The states, indeed, stood on firm ground, for they had re-enacted their old charters as the basis of their political being. But the commonwealth as a whole had no standing, and no recognised power whatever.

Some central authority was universally admitted to be necessary, since the continued existence of thirteen independent and occasionally hostile states on the Atlantic coast of America would otherwise have been precarious if not impossible. But a central authority sufficiently strong to control the separate states would have been revolted from by every citizen who stood firm upon his chartered rights. And a central authority, on the other hand, which was merely a political least-common-denominator would have been utterly inefficient and useless.

The pregnant words of a statesman, whose influence on the United States during the next few years was as deep as it was beneficial, stated the dilemma exactly. 'Too much power,' said Alexander Hamilton, 'leads to despotism, too little leads to anarchy; and both eventually to the ruin of

the people.' The problem which confronted America was that of finding a middle way between the two; and on the solution of that problem depended the question whether the new commonwealth was to become one of the great powers of the world, or to remain a collection of divided provinces, independent, indeed, but insignificant, impotent in everything save the will and the power to annoy and hamper their neighbours.

The consequences of disunion were already only too apparent in the public disorder and distress that existed in every state of the union. The close of the war had left the now independent colonies feverish and exhausted. There was, perhaps, little actual hardship among the people, for in a simple community composed mainly of farmers almost every family can provide for itself.

But the more complex machinery of civilisation had been thrown utterly out of gear by the long struggle. Money was everywhere scarce. The currency was depreciated, old, clipped, and of light weight. The paper money which Congress had issued had sunk to the merely nominal value of two cents in the dollar; the paper money issued by the states speedily fell to the same ridiculous figure.[1] And a commercial crisis was now added to the political difficulty. The American shippers had lost the benefit of protection in the British market; the animosities of the different states soon plunged neighbours into a fierce tariff war among themselves. Connecticut was attacked by Rhode Island and New York; Pennsylvania attacked Delaware. New Jersey, situated between New York and Pennsylvania, was compared to 'a cask tapped at both ends'; North Carolina, between Virginia and South Carolina, was likened to 'a patient bleeding at both stumps.'

[1] In the second civil war of 1861 the same extraordinary prices prevailed. In some places the price of a pair of boots was five hundred dollars.

For a time, at least, matters seemed to go from bad to worse ; but instead of taking steps to remedy their difficulties, the people indulged in a violent persecution of those who had disapproved the civil war.[1] Many of the wealthiest and most respected families in the colonies had refused to join in the separatist movement, and they had in consequence endured much unpopularity and active ill-treatment. At the close of the struggle there had been no cessation of the spite against them ; and thousands were now forced to leave the United States, ruined and disappointed exiles, to seek fresh homes elsewhere.

It was in vain that Congress remonstrated against these unworthy measures. Its recommendations were ignored, its protests derided ; and nothing shows its real powerlessness more clearly than its failure to enforce on the states the clauses concerning the loyalists in the treaty of peace with Britain.

The root of the trouble was evident both to Washington and Hamilton. ' Unless Congress,' said the former, ' have powers competent to all general purposes, the distresses we have encountered, the expense we have incurred, and the blood we have spilt, will avail us nothing.' And Hamilton remarked more tersely, yet not less truly, that ' the fundamental defect was a want of power in Congress ' ; but he admitted regretfully that ' the road to popularity in each state was to inspire jealousy of the powers of Congress.'

So strained a situation could not long continue without leading to a second civil war ; and at one time, indeed, civil war between the disunited English states in America seemed imminent.[2] Four years of constant friction had now elapsed since Britain recognised the independence of her American

[1] For the United Empire Loyalists, see chap. v.

[2] The student will recall the bitter words spoken by a loyalist at the close of another English civil war. ' You have done your work now,' said Sir Jacob Astley to his Puritan conquerors in 1646, ' and may go to play, unless you fall out among yourselves.' But the United States had no Cromwell to repress disorder.

colonies ; but in those four years not one step had been made towards organising the new nation on a permanent basis, not one step had been made towards that union which seemed at once the one thing needful and the one thing impossible of achievement. During these four years the United States existed only in name.

It was only the consciousness that disaster was imminent which extorted, in the memorable words of John Adams, ' the constitution from the grinding necessities of a reluctant people.' The articles of confederation had proved utterly inadequate to the situation ; the states must either go forward towards union or return to the old provincialism. On the alternative chosen depended not merely the stability but the very existence of the commonwealth.

The less-instructed and more popular aspiration, as Hamilton and every other politician of the time well knew, favoured a continuance of the unfriendly isolation of the states. Many had found that isolation profitable. A large proportion, probably even a majority, in each state distrusted the neighbouring communities ; and that distrust, as the recent events of the tariff struggle demonstrated plainly enough, was by no means without foundation. Each state, too, understood and prized the value of its independence ; it rested secure in the privileges, rights, and liberties assured by its charters and enactments. Those privileges must necessarily be diminished in any general federation ; a national union, such as was advocated by some, might even abolish them altogether. The smaller and weaker states, too, feared lest they should be tyrannised over, and possibly absorbed by the larger communities ; the latter feared that if a ' one state, one vote ' principle should be adopted as the basis of federation, they would always be hampered and sometimes be overruled by the more numerous votes of the less important members of the union.

The citizens of each state, therefore, distrusted constitu-

tional changes in proportion as they distrusted their neighbours and esteemed their own rights of paramount importance; and in every case the demagogues, who found their opportunity in the political crisis, assured the people that they were justified in their fears and their anticipations of evil. Had the simple alternatives of federation and a continuance of separate state sovereignty been put to the vote, it is by no means certain that a majority would have been found to favour the former.

Happily America possessed statesmen as well as demagogues; and the statesmen prevailed. The first small indication of a coming union was seen when some negotiations, mainly of a commercial character, took place at Annapolis in Maryland in September 1786, with the object of considering 'the common interest and permanent harmony' of the states. The debates soon made it evident that a wider basis of discussion was required; but since only five of the thirteen states had sent representatives, it was impossible to go further on that occasion. Yet the meeting was not without result. It had shown that influential men were looking for a general federation as the only means of ending the ruinous internal strife. It seemed probable that their convictions were shared in greater or less degree by the wiser politicians of the eight states which had not been represented at Annapolis. The only means of deciding the question was to put it to the test; and invitations were now issued for a general meeting of delegates from each of the thirteen states, to assemble at Philadelphia in the following year.

The Annapolis Meeting, 1786.

The invitations were accepted by all the states save Rhode Island; and on 25th May 1787, the Federal Convention met to deliberate the grand project of agreeing upon a common constitution and a general plan of union. Seventy-three delegates had been appointed; fifty-five attended. Of these, forty-three were

The Federal Convention, 1787.

present at the close of the four months' session on 17th September; thirty-nine signed the constitution as finally agreed upon.

The debates were held in private, and no report of the speeches was published until many years afterwards; the freedom from external pressure and popular agitation which was thus secured, facilitated the work of the convention very considerably: the apparent departure from democratic usage in a professedly democratic land was of minor importance.[1]

Virginia, the oldest and most influential of the states, had taken the lead in summoning the convention; and it was by Governor Randolph of Virginia that the first plan of a constitution was submitted to the delegates in a series of fifteen resolutions.

Every line of every clause in the proposed constitution was debated in that assembly during the prolonged session. Profound differences of opinion, both as to the theory and practice of government, were found to exist. Hamilton, for instance, believed that the British system was 'the best in the world,' and 'doubted much whether anything short of it would do in America.' Others advocated a pure democracy founded on 'the rights of man'; others again, more conservative, distrusted the popular tendencies of the time, holding the principle, if not quoting the words, of Winthrop's declaration in the early days of Massachusetts, that 'the best part of a community is always the least, and of that least part the wiser are still less.'

But in spite of such divergences of opinion, the delegates were practical men who were met together for a specific end. They were profoundly convinced of the urgent need for union, and they were determined not to disperse until they had accomplished their mission. Where unanimity of purpose

[1] A similar procedure was adopted in the South African Union Convention of 1909 with excellent results.

exists, agreement is seldom impossible: the result of the differences between the members of the convention was a compromise which proved stronger and more suited to the political needs of the nation than any single project emanating from any one member would have done.

The constitution which the Federal Convention ultimately put forward for adoption by the United States, and which was in fact adopted shortly afterwards, was founded partly on the British model, to a small extent on the theories of European philosophers, and more largely in accordance with the particular necessities of the period and the people. On the whole, the conservative elements in the convention gained the advantage.[1]

The Constitution.

The most obvious difference between the British constitution and that of the United States lay in the fact that the latter was precise and definite, the former loose and elastic. The one was written, the other unwritten; the one could change and develop with the changing circumstances of each generation, the other could only be altered by formal amendment. There are relative advantages both in precision and in elasticity: but a written constitution was essential to the political settlement of the United States. The country had no tradition of union, such as had existed for centuries in England, no binding force of a general public opinion to override provincial distinctions: that force and that tradition must be imposed from without, not evolved slowly from within. And since it was upon the basis of the constitution that

[1] The most noticeable sign of democratic influence in the constitution is in one of the sections of the first Article: 'No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States.' But notwithstanding the fact that many of the delegates distrusted the democratic tendencies of the people, the growth of the sentiment was too strong to be resisted. The Americans were often surprised that it did not make similar headway in Britain. Some years later George Bancroft, the historian, expressed his astonishment that monarchy and hereditary aristocracy should still survive in England (*Life and Letters of George Bancroft*), and Nathaniel Hawthorne predicted the triumph of democracy in England as a result of the Crimean War. (See *Hawthorne's Diaries.*)

national unity must be built, no mere general principles were sufficient; a clear statement of the power and authority resident in each department of the state was imperative. The union of the nation would not have lasted an hour had it rested on a vague sentiment of brotherhood.

The constitution differed considerably in many other ways from its British prototype. The beneficent theories of English political philosophers had fortuitously combined with the arbitrary practice of a British sovereign to induce a prejudice against hereditary monarchy in America; and although there were those who desired a king of the United States, their numbers were few and their influence small in comparison with the advocates of a republic. The head of the nation was to be a President, elected indirectly by the suffrage of the people, and holding office for four years. His functions were extensive, and in certain emergencies his power was practically unlimited; he could only be removed from office on conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanours.

Two legislative bodies were established, as in Britain: the Senate and the House of Representatives, which together constituted the Congress or parliament of the United States. The House of Representatives was chosen directly by the people, and with it rested the sole power of impeachment and of raising revenue: its functions, therefore, were hardly different in principle from those of the British House of Commons.

But the Senate differed far more considerably from the British House of Lords. No hereditary aristocracy existed in America, and any attempt to establish such a privileged body would have been contrary to the now accepted theory of the Declaration of Independence, that 'all men were created equal.' Titles of nobility were expressly forbidden in the constitution; there could also be no lords spiritual in America, since there was no Established Church. The members of the Senate, therefore, were elected, not directly

by the people, but by the various states of the union. There were two members for each state; one-third were to retire every second year, so that the composition of the Upper House was completely changed every six years.

The representatives, on the other hand, were elected every alternate year, and served two years. Both senators and representatives were to 'receive a compensation for their services'—a principle that had been abandoned in England, but was subsequently adopted elsewhere by other parliaments of the English people overseas.

The idea underlying the payment of members was that the nation ought in justice to remunerate services which were presumably useful or valuable; it may also have been introduced in the hope of preventing the corruption, place-hunting, and general scheme of organised bribery which was at that time so scandalous a feature of the British Parliament.[1] Experience showed that it was not an unmixed benefit. It certainly gave some men the opportunity of serving their country whose poverty would otherwise have prevented them. But it also attracted others to enter a political career who were not fitted for it, and who would not have sought election had no salary been attached to membership of Congress. On the whole, it did not tend to purify the atmosphere of politics, although it was by no means wholly or even mainly responsible for their subsequent degradation in the United States. And it certainly did not abolish the old evils of place-hunting—the remedy for that seemingly incurable disease is still to seek—nor did it prevent either bribery or corruption. The salary had no effect in making an honest man dishonest, or a dishonest man honest; it simply gave him an additional interest in holding his seat, and therefore to that extent tended to lessen his independence. But the extraordinary develop-

[1] The members of the Continental Congress were remunerated for their work; but those who sat in the old colonial legislatures had been unpaid.

ments of American electioneering and political campaigning were mercifully hidden from the delegates of the Federal Convention at Philadelphia.

In one respect the constitution was far in advance of the British, for it allowed none of those pocket boroughs or other electoral anomalies which were not swept away in England until the Reform Bill of 1832 was passed. In another respect it was inferior, in that it recognised the continued existence of slavery. That feature was inevitable, for the southern states would not have acceeded to the union on any other terms. But the problem was postponed and not settled: it was on that question that the constitution and the republic together were nearly wrecked seventy years later.

The final draft of the constitution, as it was presented to the nation for approval or rejection, was a memorable document. It was utterly lacking in the rhetoric which was conspicuous in the Declaration of Independence: the constitution was solid statecraft throughout. Yet the passion for liberty was not less strong among the delegates of 1787 than among those of 1776: it was merely sobered by a sense of grave responsibility. Wild things were still to be done in the first years of the republic, and wild measures counselled by hotheads in high places: but the real leaders of the nation, who were strongly represented in the Federal Convention, had no belief in mere words. There is not a redundant expression or a meaningless phrase in the whole constitution.

It had been agreed that the constitution must be ratified by nine of the thirteen states before it became binding on the republic. The delegates to the convention completed their labours on 17th September 1787; on 7th December of the same year the least important state of the union, Delaware, was the first to signify its assent. Others followed in rapid succession, New Hampshire giving the ninth and deciding vote on 21st June 1788. North Carolina, the neighbour of the state which led the secessionist

The Constitution ratified by the States.

movement in 1860, hesitated over a year longer before ratifying on 21st November 1789; Rhode Island, the smallest state of all, and the only state unrepresented at the convention, was the last to accept the constitution, on 29th May 1790.

Federation was now at length assured. 'The constitution as it came from the convention,' said James Madison, one of the Virginia delegates and a future President of the United States, 'was nothing more than the draft of a plan; nothing but a dead letter, until life and validity were breathed into it by the voice of the people speaking through the several state conventions which accepted and ratified it.'[1]

The constitution was made and ratified; it had yet to be seen whether the elaborate machinery would work and wear without friction. It must be admitted that the prospects did not at first appear very hopeful. No human scheme has yet been devised that contented everybody; no great change has ever been made that was not open to some criticism. There were immediate protests against each and all the clauses of the constitution, while thousands of citizens continued to dislike the whole idea of federation. The few advocates of complete national union were dissatisfied because the constitution did not go far enough; the far more numerous advocates of the sovereign rights of the states were dissatisfied because it went too far.

Among the malcontents Patrick Henry stood well to the fore; and his opposition was typical of the difficulties in the way of union. That most eloquent of the many eloquent orators of the southern states had once declared in a moment of rhetorical enthusiasm that all provincial distinctions were henceforth at an end, and that he was no longer a Virginian, but an American. His passionate crusade against every

[1] The French philosopher-historian Guizot once asked James Russell Lowell how long the American republic would last. 'So long as the ideas of its founders continue to prevail,' was the sensible answer.

clause of the constitution now proved how little that declaration had been worth ; and there were many who, like Henry, were ready enough to subscribe to a vague sentiment, but unwilling to agree to any practical plan.

Every state possessed politicians eager to follow his example; but opposition begat opposition, and the authors of the constitution proved themselves at least the equals in argument of their critics. That classic of American political discussion, the *Federalist*, whose unshakable logic is enforced by an intense earnestness and clearness of style, was by far the most notable product of this war of words ; its excellence, indeed, has saved it from the common fate of such ephemeral literature. Written as a contribution to the current thought of the day, it has survived for several generations, and seems likely to survive as many more : it was an answer in brass to an attack of paper pellets.

But however able might be the arguments and counter-arguments, the constitution had still to justify itself by the only real test to which a constitution can be put— the test of practical working ; and for that justification a strong yet popular administration, which possessed and would retain the confidence of the community, was essential.

The First Administration, 1789.

It was extremely difficult to form a Cabinet at once capable of firm and united action, and yet fairly representative of a nation that was still split into violently divided sections. The task, however, was accomplished not unsuccessfully ; and although divisions and even defections soon occurred among the inner ranks, these were not serious enough to disorganise the administration or to render its continuance distasteful to the people. And the visible success which presently crowned its efforts added vastly to the stability of the constitution. At the beginning of the first administration of the United States the constitution was merely a paper document ; at the end of that administration, eight

years later, it was reverenced as the fundamental basis of the republic.

George Washington, First President, 1789-97.

Happily there could be no hesitation as to the choice of the first president of the republic. One man alone stood 'first in peace, first in war, and first in the hearts of his countrymen'; and that man was George Washington. He was reluctant, indeed, to accept the great office to which he was unanimously elected. He was no longer young. For forty years he had borne his full share of the burdens of the state. He loved the peaceful retreat in Virginia to which he had returned after his strenuous and prolonged campaigns; he was filled with the 'great and sole desire to live and die in peace and retirement on his own farm.' He had fully satisfied the fiery ambition of his youth; he needed rest, and he had little taste for politics.

But the call of duty never appealed to Washington in vain. With some forebodings of ill, and many doubts of his own qualifications, the late commander-in-chief of the American army prepared himself to accept the office of President of the United States. 'About ten of the clock,' he wrote on 16th April 1789, 'I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and, with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its calls, but with less hope of answering its expectations.'

The fear of failure was natural to a man who had always rated his abilities at too moderate a value; and the eight years of Washington's presidency were in truth among the most difficult of his career. But assuredly they were the years during which he rendered the greatest services to his country. The victories which had won independence would have been useless had they not been followed by the political settlement that took place under his government.

Associated with Washington in the Cabinet were several

men whose names were already celebrated in the republic, and whose work is still remembered by a not ungrateful nation. John Adams was Vice-President. Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, became Secretary of State. James Madison, a cautious follower of Jefferson's political theories, led the administration in the House of Representatives. John Jay, who had assisted in the negotiation of the Treaty of Independence in 1783, was appointed Chief Justice.

But the greatest of Washington's colleagues, and the man who left the most permanent mark on the government, was Alexander Hamilton, the 'little lion,' whose constructive statesmanship was now to prove of supreme value to the republic. Of mixed Scottish and Huguenot descent, Hamilton had been born at Nevis in the West Indies on 11th January 1757. That petty island offered no opportunities to a child who quickly showed himself possessed of more than ordinary ability; and, after a short experience of business life at home, the brilliant youth was sent to complete his education in America.

Alexander Hamilton, 1757-1804.

That step unwittingly determined Hamilton's career. In happier days he might have taken a leading part in the consolidation of the empire. But its disruption had already become inevitable; and a visit to Boston, the headquarters of the secessionist movement, changed him from a loyalist to a convinced adherent of the rebel cause.

He published some pamphlets in which the arguments for independence were singularly well stated; the time, however, had come for sharper weapons, and Hamilton joined the colonial army in 1775. As a captain of artillery he was described by a contemporary observer: he looked, it was said, 'a mere boy, with small, slender, and delicate frame, who, with cocked hat pulled down over his eyes, and apparently lost in thought, marched beside his cannon, patting it every now and then as if it were a favourite horse or pet plaything.'

Two years later the young soldier was appointed aide-de-camp to Washington, in which function he earned the gratitude and affection of his chief; while a daring assault on the royal troops in the final scene of the war at Yorktown gave Hamilton a reputation for courage which his subsequent life did not belie.

But with the close of the war all chance of a military career in the service of the republic came to an end; and Hamilton now returned to civil life, supporting himself by legal work in the New York courts of justice. His reputation was soon secure as the most successful advocate in the United States; but politics attracted him at least as strongly as the law, and, as a delegate at the Philadelphia Conference in 1787, he submitted a scheme for a federal constitution. He was then no more than thirty years of age; in another two years he accepted the post of Secretary to the Treasury in Washington's first administration.

Hamilton's constitutional scheme had been rejected by the Philadelphia Conference; but its introduction had sufficiently defined his views of statecraft. Those views he now proceeded to put into practice from the treasury office; and in doing so he acted with a fearless disregard of criticism and personal abuse, and a single aim to what he conceived to be the interests of the republic, which was as rare as it was invaluable in those years of political fluidity.

In carrying out his policy Hamilton possessed the enormous advantage that he was the first occupant of his post. He was bound by no precedents: he had to create them. He found, it is true, no organisation ready to his hand; but he could mould the organisation after his own will. Like Washington in the civil war, he had to create his forces for dealing with the work before him when the struggle over the national finances had already begun; but the very lack of preparation which had hampered the soldier gave the statesman a freer hand. While lesser politicians such as Madison were

lamenting that they 'were in a wilderness without a single footstep to guide them,' Hamilton was finding his way out of the wilderness alone. The situation was one which could appeal only to a strong man: but to a strong man it appealed irresistibly.

Hamilton's policy was essentially one of centralisation: it was an attempt to raise the power of the new federal authority above that of the old individual states. The methods by which the Treasurer worked towards his ultimate aim fall roughly under three heads. He endeavoured, firstly, to weld the states into union by a centralising financial policy; secondly, to embark on a course of national development in military defence and commercial expansion, a course which he believed 'necessary to the perfection of the body politic'; and, thirdly, to confirm the independence of the republic by a foreign policy which should be at once neutral and friendly to European powers. The new world had, in his opinion, no concern in the quarrels of the old.

His Centralising Policy.

Hamilton succeeded as regards the first and third points; the second was premature. The immediate difficulty of the republic was financial; and here the success of the Treasurer was so evident that faction itself could hardly criticise his work. A national bank was founded under Hamilton's auspices in 1791; the national debts were partially consolidated, and a rapid advance in the financial position of the United States was thereby effected. European capitalists no longer jeered at applications for a loan, as they had done a year or so before; the internal commerce of the republic was no longer hampered by insecurity and tariff wars. And apart from the immediate improvement, it soon became apparent that the centralising policy of the treasury was giving a stability to the union which had previously been unknown.

The value of Hamilton's financial work was thus so obvious that it left little room for hostile criticism. But as the

tendency of his policy became more clear, it aroused a bitter and factious spirit of opposition which at one time bade fair to wreck the Treasurer and the constitution together; and, unhappily, the opposition was led, secretly at first, but eventually in more pronounced fashion, by Jefferson, a member of the Cabinet, and nominally, at least, one of Hamilton's colleagues.

Hamilton is opposed by Jefferson.

The enmity between the two men was regretted by many as a source of weakness to the republic. The regret was natural but useless: Hamilton and Jefferson represented opposite schools of political thought, and a collision was sooner or later inevitable. The division of opinion in the Cabinet was merely a sign that a division of opinion existed in the nation: and that division, which was already forming two political parties in the republic, was typified in the policy and character of the two leaders.

Hamilton stood for the exaltation of the single federal authority over that of the individual states; Jefferson for that of the states over the federal authority. Hamilton stood for the new system of union, highly organised and centralised, efficient and powerful; Jefferson stood for the old loose connection, which advanced into a somewhat informal federation during periods of common stress, and faded almost into nothingness in normal times of quiet. Hamilton regarded the nation itself as a unit, Jefferson regarded the men composing the nation: Hamilton, in short, was a Republican and Jefferson a Democrat.[1] Between two such men, holding such different political views, there could be no firm union.

Either creed would have been injurious in its results had it been applied in practice to its logical conclusion. In their ultimate form Hamilton's theories would have led to auto-

[1] The fact that in this matter Hamilton was a reformer and Jefferson a conservative was merely incidental, and a purely accidental result of their opinions and the conditions of the times; nevertheless, it aggravated the opposition of the two men.

cracy, while Jefferson's ideas would have ended in anarchy. But in the conduct of political affairs the English people are a practical rather than a logical race; unless they suffer their judgment to be overriden by sentiment—in which event a sane revulsion generally produces speedy penitence—they are more ready to compromise a dispute than to proceed to extremes. Hamilton had no desire to crush the states so long as the republic was dominant; Jefferson had no desire to abolish the federal union, so long as the real power was held by the states. The constitutional history of the republic for the next three-quarters of a century contains little more than the struggle between the two principles, which was finally decided by the second civil war.

But Hamilton and Jefferson differed fundamentally in their political methods as well as in their political principles; and a study of the characters of the two men shows at once why Hamilton's work was permanent, and why Jefferson's policy was more successful as an appeal to the electorate. The Virginian moulded his principles according to the popular will; the West Indian endeavoured to mould the popular will according to his principles. The latter acted as a statesman; the former was never far removed from the demagogue. Hamilton was a leader, whereas Jefferson was a follower, of the people; Hamilton showed men the path along which they should march, while Jefferson waited on the verdict of the majority or divined it in advance. The latter sought and even demanded applause; the former merely accepted it when it came.

Hamilton was, indeed, no seeker after popularity. Had he possessed the faintest trace of the demagogue in his character, he would have pursued a diametrically opposite policy; for he had already observed that the favour of the people was given to those who upheld the sovereign rights of the states, whereas he, on the contrary, was doing his utmost to elevate the federal authority. And at a time when every

pettifogging politician in the republic was advocating the violation of the treaty with Great Britain, and repudiating the debts of the loyalists,[1] Hamilton sternly protested against a course which was unworthy of a civilised people and a victorious nation.

Jefferson, on the other hand, never repudiated the repudiators; and he opposed Hamilton's constructive policy on the ground that it went beyond the clear words of the federal constitution. Hamilton replied that the power was implied although not expressly stated in the constitution; and as regards the founding of the national bank he carried his point. Jefferson, again, following the popular sentiment which Hamilton characterised as 'a womanish attachment to France and a womanish resentment against Great Britain,' fanned the growing enthusiasm for the French Revolution in the United States.[2] He was ready and even anxious to aid the French in their war with England, and to 'keep alive an altercation' with the British as a sign of invincible hostility.

Such a course might easily have brought disaster upon the young English nation of the West: but Hamilton saw more clearly that the interests of the United States lay in the maintenance of strict neutrality; and he was not afraid of running counter to the emotional currents of the hour if he

[1] It may be noted that repudiation was again advocated during the foreign troubles which arose out of the war of 1861. The fundamental honesty of the people of the United States saved them from a course which was frequently pursued by the lesser South American republics. There is a discussion of the subject in one of Thackeray's delightful *Roundabout Papers*.

[2] Some of the Americans made themselves not a little ridiculous in their sympathy with the French Revolution. A militia dinner was given at Philadelphia, to which the French ambassador was invited; 'the head of a pig was severed from its body, and, being recognised as an emblem of the murdered King of France, was carried round to the guests. Each one, placing the cap of liberty upon his head, pronounced the word "Tyrant!" and proceeded to mangle with his knife the head of the luckless creature doomed to be served for so unworthy a purpose.'—Hazen's *American Opinion on the French Revolution*.

might thereby serve the republic. Utterly against the wishes of his uneasy but weaker colleague, he again carried his point. The Declaration of Neutrality, which was issued on 22nd April 1793, was, indeed, signed by Jefferson as Secretary of State; but the principles which it enunciated were those of Hamilton. And it is one of the ironies of history that the same essential system of foreign policy which Hamilton formulated has since become known to all the world in association with the name of one of his most bitter and least honourable opponents: the Monroe Doctrine is but a precise and extended definition of the general principles of foreign policy which Hamilton advocated.[1]

Hamilton was thus successful during these years both in domestic and foreign affairs; and it was well for the republic that such was the case. He cemented the union at home and made the United States respected abroad; and in doing so he received ungrudging support from the President. Washington's grasp of politics was slow, but it was certain; Hamilton, on the other hand, was as quick in his actions as he was clear in his outlook. The two together were more than a match for Jefferson and those who were gradually beginning to form a party under his leadership.

Jefferson forms the Democratic Party.

But if the West Indian was superior to the Virginian in the Cabinet, there could be no question of his inferiority in the not less important matter of gaining public support. Hamilton was respected in many quarters as a ruler; Jefferson was loved everywhere as a friend. And the latter now devoted all his energies to the creation of a political party which should oust Washington and Hamilton from office, which should gain power for

[1] A curious although not altogether exact parallel might be drawn by those who care for such things between the general policy of Hamilton and Bismarck and that of Jefferson and Gladstone. Hamilton's system is best summarised in his own words:—'Energy without asperity seems best to comport with the dignity of national language. The force ought to be more in the idea than in the expression of manner. Real firmness is good for anything; strut is good for nothing.'

those who were beginning to call themselves Democrats, the defenders of the rights of man which had been defined in the Declaration of Independence, the defenders of the sovereign rights of the individual states, and the enemies of centralisation and closer union.

Both the title and the objects of the new party were admirably chosen as a bid for popularity. The rights of man and the freedom of the people had been the watchwords of the secessionists. An odour of emotional enthusiasm surrounded the still untarnished name of democrat. The individual sovereignty of the states was the cause favoured by the majority. The closer union for which Washington and Hamilton were working was still too novel an idea to be readily accepted by a people who had only recently passed through one great revolution, and who were in no mind to face another fundamental change without greater evidence of its necessity than was immediately apparent to them.

Their old charters they knew and understood; the new constitution was untried and uncertain in the extent of its application. And although the Americans can hardly be accused of conservatism in their social or industrial life, they are conservative enough in respect for their fundamental institutions. The federal constitution had not as yet the undivided authority of the nation at its back; while the centralising policy of Hamilton had in some degree revolted the intense individualism of the people whom he ruled.

These points were thoroughly appreciated by Jefferson and those who joined with him in founding a Democratic party in the year 1791. And they realised, far more clearly than did Washington and some of those older politicians who had not yet sloughed the semi-aristocratic traditions of bygone colonial days, that a government which derives all its authority from the people must render some, at least, of that authority back to the people. It must follow the public in order to lead them; it must often conciliate and sometimes

cajole: it must explain its aims, and accommodate its methods to the common taste.

Even in small external observances the new order began to show its working. Washington had preserved the same quiet dignity in office which had become second nature to the great planters of Virginia; Jefferson, on the other hand, cultivated an ostentatious carelessness of demeanour and a shabbiness of apparel which was supposed to mark the true democrat.

Such trivial affectations were harmless enough in themselves: a more dangerous and indecent method was employed in the campaign of personal abuse which was launched against every member of the government. Jefferson and his satellites had wisely obtained control over a large portion of the press; and every organ which supported them teemed with allegations of corruption, malversation, and treachery on the part of individuals within the Cabinet. Hamilton was besmirched with filth of this kind week after week with monotonous regularity; even the revered name of George Washington was not exempt from the foulest abuse.

Baseness of their Methods.

Both were accused of conspiring to overthrow the republic and endeavouring to found a new monarchy. The solemn ceremonies which Washington considered a fitting accompaniment of his high position as first citizen of the republic were derided as 'the apish mimicry of kings'; he was himself reviled as 'the source of the misfortunes of our country,' and as one who had multiplied evils on the community.[1] It was suggested that the day on which he retired from office should be commemorated as a day of jubilee; he was even accused of peculation, and his impeachment was demanded.

The perspective of a diminishing past has long since made these charges ridiculous; but at the time there were many who believed them to be true. Washington, indeed, disdained to answer calumnies which his magnificent services

[1] *The Aurora*, 4th March 1797; quoted in Oliver's *Hamilton*.

and his probity of character sufficiently refuted. But Hamilton was forced to reply to the accusations of corruption and peculation, since they were the most damning charges that could possibly be brought against a financial minister; and he replied with a clearness which showed conclusively that he had never touched one cent of the public funds, and a completeness which should have crushed his unworthy opponents for ever.

Yet they continued to reiterate slanders which had been utterly disproved, and in so doing they began the ignoble work of debasing the political life of the republic—a work which was unhappily destined to go far in the United States, and which, under the sinister rule of President Jackson thirty years later, finally disgusted and scandalised thousands of respectable citizens by introducing the 'spoils to the victors' system. The high professions of the Democrats were accompanied by a base attempt to drive decency and honesty out of public affairs; the defence of the rights of man seemed compatible with the most absolute neglect of the more antiquated political virtues.

Triumph of the Democrats, 1801.

But such methods, disgraceful as they were, could hardly fail of success in a republic whose citizens, though shrewd, were easily misled by an appeal to prejudice and emotion. The Democrats had chosen the winning cards, and they played a more cunning game. The Republicans, on the other hand, had not made so close a study of that most important of administrative arts in a democracy, the art of obtaining and maintaining a majority. The Republicans, moreover, had come to be allied with the Government since the formation of a Democratic party opposed to both; and they had to bear all the odium of its mistakes, and all the odium which attached to it when it honestly and courageously resisted the popular passions of the hour.

Under the two administrations of George Washington,

mistakes on the whole were few, although friction was constant; but his successor in the presidency, John Adams of New England, proved himself possessed of a perfect genius for doing the wrong thing. Clever electioneers pointed the inevitable moral; and at the presidential election of 1801, ten years after the formation of the Democratic party, its political campaign was rewarded with victory. Jefferson, its founder, became president of the republic; and so well had he laid the foundations of his power, that his opponents were left in a minority for many years.

The triumph of Jefferson necessarily implied the defeat of Hamilton, and the great statesman of federal union was naturally pessimistic as to the future. Four years previously, on his retirement from active life, Washington had warned the nation in the earnest and solemn accents of a magnificent Farewell Address, against any weakening of the union, against the growth of party spirit, and against foreign entanglements. But the success of the Democrats seemed to show that the lesson had been disregarded. Hamilton knew that each of the great principles which he professed was flouted and disowned by the exultant disciples of Jefferson. Instead of the union being steadfastly maintained, he feared that the republic would drift perilously near to disruption under the loose hand of the ardent advocate of state rights. Instead of party spirit being discouraged, he knew that the Democrats had stimulated its growth. And instead of the dignified aloofness from European affairs which was essential to the quiet and steady growth of the republic, he knew that the Democrats had advocated a war with Britain and an alliance with France for reasons which, to the clear brain of Hamilton, appeared effeminate and sentimental.

But though Hamilton knew it not, the decisive moment at which the federal constitution could have been tampered with had already passed. Hamilton's own work was too solid to be disturbed: the conservative American mind had

swung round from a grudging and hesitating acceptance to a hearty support of the constitution during the years of Washington's presidency; and no serious attempts were made to change the fundamental law of the republic until fresh problems arose whose solution was not fully provided for in the constitution of 1787. And the same Jefferson who, when in opposition, had brought forward resolutions [1] that the states were competent to judge the validity of federal laws, and who had therefore given unequivocal support to the theory that the states were superior to the republic, proved himself in office a staunch upholder of the federal authority; while some of his acts as president, and in particular the Louisiana purchase of 1803, stretched the constitution not merely beyond the limits which he had advocated a few years before, but even, perhaps, beyond the limits which Washington and Hamilton themselves might have approved.

Stability and Expansion of the Republic.

Inconsistencies are common, and even inevitable, in the career of any statesman who moves with the times: the one man who is invariably useless in politics is he whose views remain unchanged from cradle to grave. But with a man who followed public opinion so closely as did Jefferson the contradiction between his speeches in opposition and his actions in office was notable as more than a merely personal act. It was an admission that the republic had entered on a new period of life: the controversies which had filled the preceding eighteen years, from the recognition of independence in 1783 to the beginning of the new century, were now to be shelved for a while.

The working of the constitution had demonstrated its stability; it had likewise demonstrated the stability of the republic. But with the accession of the Democrats

[1] Jefferson was the real author of the 'Kentucky Resolutions' of 1798 which advanced the theory that the states were the judges of the validity of federal laws. But the theory, which would in effect have reduced the constitution to a nullity, proved abortive.

constitutional issues were laid aside, or at least relegated to a secondary place; and the rapid enlargement of the thirteen states indicated the vitality of the new nation not less clearly than the constitution had indicated the solidity of its foundation.

The Louisiana purchase of 1803, which gave the United States control over the Mississippi valley, was the first definite sign that the English people in America had not lost the power of expansion which distinguished them in colonial days; and this first increase was succeeded by further acquisitions in the west and the south, in Florida, in Texas, and in New Mexico, which changed the small Atlantic territories of the later eighteenth century into an enormous dominion that reached across a continent and in time controlled oversea colonies of its own. Only against British North America did the tide roll back helplessly; elsewhere an epoch of extraordinary energy and growth began for the nation, which soon proved itself at least as great a colonising power as the mother England from which it had sprung.

The year 1801 roughly divides the period when the foundations of the republic were being laid from the period when its expansion began. The older generation of statesmen was already passing away. The brilliant career of Alexander Hamilton was brought to a premature close by a political duel in 1804. John Adams still lived, but his work was done; and the old New Englander was not altogether pleased with some of the newer tendencies of the time.[1] Jefferson had, indeed, many years of active life before him; but George Washington, the noblest and by far the greatest of the secessionist leaders, had died in 1799, his last years clouded with the factious

[1] In the year 1816 Adams remarked, in connection with the orations which were annually given on the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, that he took no pleasure in hearing 'young gentlemen of genius describing scenes they never saw, and descanting in feelings they never felt, and which great pains had been taken they never should feel.' Adams died on the same day as Jefferson, and curiously enough on the anniversary of the Declaration—4th July 1826.

opposition that had assailed him, as he himself complained 'in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, to a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket.'

The body of the patriot reposed in no national mausoleum, but in a lonely and neglected yet peaceful spot at Mount Vernon, the old home of his family in Virginia[1]; the spirit of self-sacrifice, of steadfast devotion to a high ideal of duty and unostentatious courage which had marked his whole life, remained an abiding possession of the people for whom he had worked. And if they had traduced him and misjudged him while he was yet among them, the veneration of successive generations has since done something to remove the stain of contemporary intrigue and the envy which lesser men feel for one cast in a larger and more perfect mould than themselves.

The statesmen of the revolution died; the nation which they had created marched onwards.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSTITUTION OF CANADA: 1763-91[2]

From the wreck of British power in North America there yet remained a country almost as large as Europe, that stretched

[1] Washington's old friendship with the Fairfaxes was not forgotten even in death. He left a Bible to one of the family, who followed the body to the grave. The neglected condition of his tomb is noticed in Mrs. Bagot's *Journal* (1816), reprinted in *George Canning and his Friends*. According to her, Mount Vernon had also lost its old splendour, for she remarks that 'the house was in a very bad state of repair; winds whistled through it in every direction.'

[2] Authorities.—Kingsford's *History* is the standard work. *The Making of Canada*, by A. G. Bradley, is the most interesting, and perhaps the best literary account of the times within moderate compass; the same author's *Life of Carleton* should also be consulted. Bourinot's *Canada under British Rule* is a good summary of the period. The valuable *Official Documents Relating to the Constitutional History of Canada*, 1759-91,

vaguely from Atlantic to Pacific. Its southern boundaries were the great lakes, the St. Lawrence River, and the long, undefined United States frontier; northwards it reached an unknown distance into the Arctic. By far the larger part of this vast territory was unexplored; though poor and sparsely populated everywhere, an air of mystery and withal of romance hung over the land. The youngest of England's possessions, its chief, and almost its only European inhabitants, were French; but by the strange irony of fate, which loves to juggle with nations as with individuals, these latter remained in the empire when the original colonies seceded.

Canada as a British Possession.

The importance of British America was not yet dreamed of in England. The far northern territories, which were under the control of the Hudson's Bay Company, were supposed to be a frozen wilderness inhabited only by wild beasts and barbarians. And a large and by no means inarticulate party had been altogether opposed to the annexation of Canada at the peace of 1763. Few believed at the time that the incorporation of New France in the British Empire would be of any real advantage.

At First considered Worthless.

The general opinion of the day may be gauged from one of the now forgotten pamphlets issued during the Seven Years' War, in which a political writer remarked forcibly that Canada would 'be a very unnecessary acquisition for us. Situated in a cold climate, she produces no commodity, except

published by the Dominion Government at Ottawa in 1907, are essential; Egerton and Grant's *Canadian Constitutional Development* is also useful. Sir C. P. Lucas, in his *History of Canada*, 1763-1812, founds his work to a great extent on the preceding authorities. Sulte's *Histoire des Canadiens Français* is often useful.

For the United Empire Loyalists, see Sabine's *Loyalists*; C. H. Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*; J. E. Wilmot, *Losses, Services, and Claims of the American Loyalists*; Ryerson's *Loyalists of America*; and the valuable *Transactions of the United Empire Loyalists' Association*. A complete list of the original settlers in Ontario is reprinted in the centenary publication.

The Canadian Official Statistics and the Government Atlas of Canada, prepared in 1906 under the direction of Mr. James White, are invaluable.

furs and skins, which she could exchange for the commodities of Europe; and consequently she could have little returns to make the English merchant. This trade, when carried on with France, fell short in its most flourishing state of £140,000 a year; and in our hands would not probably yield half what it did to France.' The soil, moreover, was declared to be 'very barren, and the means of getting a livelihood very difficult.' The very title of the pamphlet denied the value of the country; it was headed *A Letter to a Great Minister, on the Prospect of a Peace, wherein . . . the Importance of Canada* (*is*) *fully refuted.*[1]

The author of another ephemeral sheet of the time supposed that 'Canada was not worth their (the French) asking'; the only reason for our taking it, in his opinion, was 'because they might menace us again' in the older British colonies. And the capture of the French Empire in the West was declared by a whole tribe of writers and speakers to be of less value than the single island of Guadeloupe in the West Indies.

The doubtful science of political prophecy has seldom been less successfully exercised; but many years were to elapse before juster views began to prevail. A short time previous to his untimely but glorious death at Quebec, Wolfe had indeed foretold that 'this will sometime hence be a vast empire, the seat of power and learning; Nature has refused it nothing, and there will grow a people out of our little spot, England, that will fill this vast space and divide this portion of the globe with the Spaniards, who are possessed of the other half.' But his view naturally included the older British colonies, as well as the French territories which he was about to subdue; and not the farthest-sighted statesman, nor the boldest political dreamer of the age,[2] believed that Canada itself had any future.

[1] The pamphlet is dated 1761.

[2] The anonymous writer of the *Reign of George VI.*, dated 1763 (see the first chapter of this Book), had no conception of any future for Canada.

The country was, indeed, but little known when it passed into British hands. A few English trappers and fur-traders had tracked into the forests of the interior : but such men are seldom loquacious. The English Hudson's Bay Company had established its outposts to the north and west : but commercial corporations are not given to publishing the results of their discoveries when they fear that such publicity may disturb their quiet monopoly of trade ; and the Hudson's Bay Company had, in fact, steadily discouraged the immigration of any who might prove possible competitors in their not unprofitable business. And the province of Quebec, the central province of New France, and the one district of Canada which had been as yet partially reclaimed from the vast wilderness of forest and prairie that stretched unbroken to the Rocky Mountains, was inhabited by a people altogether alien in language and religion, in laws and habits of thought, from the British.

Britain and the French Canadians.

But the fall of the city of Quebec on 13th September 1759 was the fall of the French dominions in America ; for Quebec was the key which unlocked the great door that led through the St. Lawrence into the heart of the continent. A last gallant effort of the Canadians to recapture their metropolis failed ; and when Montreal capitulated on 8th September in the following year, the French posts in the interior, many of which were already abandoned, proved altogether untenable. Three years later the whole country was ceded absolutely to Britain.

The settlers in Canada, most of whom were drawn from the sturdy stocks of Normandy and Brittany, were devoted and patriotic sons of France ; but although they were given the opportunity of returning to the motherland by the same Treaty of Paris which in 1763 relinquished their country to Britain, few of them deserted the colony to which the majority were bound by the silent yet deep attachment of years.

The total European population of Canada at the time was

about seventy thousand ; of these not more than two hundred and seventy went back to France. The greater part of those who thus returned were the *seigneurs*, or landowners who held their estates under the feudal terms which the kings of France had introduced in their western dominions [1] ; the bulk of the people remained on their farms in the province of Quebec.

Their presence constituted a new and difficult problem in imperial policy ; and it was not a problem which could be solved, as so many others had been solved by British statesmen, by the simple process of leaving it alone. It was evident that the French would retain for many years, and in all probability for ever, a vast preponderance of population in the province. There were very few English people in Quebec, nor was there any reason to anticipate an extensive immigration of British settlers into the new colony. And although the French had not increased rapidly under the rule of their own kings, their numbers would now no longer be kept down by continual war with the neighbouring British possessions ; while the fact that they married young and reared large families was in itself sufficient indication of a speedy growth of population.

The British authorities were thus confronted with the permanent presence of an alien race on the soil of the empire ; and it did not tend to alleviate their difficulties that the new subjects of George III. were sprung from the nation which had been for many centuries the worthy rival and the almost constant enemy of the English in Europe. The French Canadians had, it is true, sworn allegiance to the British king. But the empty ceremony of an enforced oath was no more binding than were the words which announced the eternal friendship of France and England in the Treaty of Paris ; and it could not be expected that the French in America would renounce that fealty of the heart to their

[1] See bk. iv. ch. iv.

own mother country which is the one guarantee of human loyalty.

In these unpromising circumstances, various courses were open to British statesmen in their dealings with Canada. They might treat their French subjects frankly as a conquered people, allowing them no more privileges than were stipulated by the cession of 1763, and ruling them with the iron hand of unsympathetic despotism. They might attempt to anglicise them by forbidding the use of the French language, by introducing English schools and English laws, and by giving official posts only to those few Canadians who forsook their own people and made common cause with the British. They might endeavour, by planting sufficient settlers of English origin, to put the French in a minority; and having thus counteracted any possibility of foreign dominance in a British possession, they might confer upon the people of Quebec as a whole those parliamentary institutions which prevailed in every British colony in America; or, in the alternative, they might restrict the privilege to men of British stock. Or finally, they might pursue a policy at once more rare and generous; and by a liberal treatment of their new subjects, they might in time convince the French Canadians that they had not lost but gained by the change of rule. The world's history was not lacking in examples of each method of dealing with a conquered people.

Happily for the empire, the British Government decided to act generously. They made no attempt to overwhelm the French by planting English settlers in Quebec; on the contrary, the absurd arrogance displayed by the few hundred English immigrants who entered the colony of their own accord was frequently restrained by the imperial authorities. The French Canadians were among the most devoted and loyal sons of the Catholic Church, whose precepts they obeyed and whose doctrines they believed with unquestioning faith. An important

Liberal Policy of the British Government.

clause in the treaty which ceded Canada to Britain in 1763 had stipulated that they should be free to exercise their religion; and that stipulation was always scrupulously observed, in spite of the complaints and agitation of the more bigoted Protestants in England and America.

Nor were the old French customs and laws of the province changed or interfered with more than was absolutely necessary; and the advice of those enthusiasts who believed that every British institution was of inestimable benefit and of universal application was sensibly rejected.

The policy was fully justified by its results. The French Canadians were at first disturbed and uneasy at the prospect of alien government[1]; yet within a generation they had come to rely upon that government as their forefathers had never relied upon the rule of France.

Had it not been, indeed, for the unforeseen immigration of the British into that part of the then undivided colony of Quebec which is now known as Ontario, it is probable that there would have been none of those political and racial crises which, during the next century, taxed the ablest imperial administrators with their solution. Had the English people not invaded Canada, had they left the colony entirely to that profoundly wise British statesmanship which changed the French Canadians from unwilling subjects to loyal citizens of the empire, there would have been no constitutional difficulty in 1791, no outbreak in 1837, no final deadlock in 1864.

But there would also have been no strenuous industrial subjugation of the vast territory, no rapid development of its resources, no peaceful yet victorious march of a huge army of settlers to the great West, no federation of growing provinces, and no modern Dominion of Canada. The same

[1] 'They were terrified, and in a state almost of distraction. They neither expected to retain their religion nor their laws, and looked upon themselves as a ruined and abandoned people.'—Evidence of Chief Justice of Quebec before House of Commons, 1774.

vital energy which has involved British America in frequent constitutional and social difficulties has likewise advanced the colony from an ignorant, obscure, and backward province —such as Quebec was in 1763—to a vigorous and thriving nation, and that vital energy has been almost entirely of English origin. The descendants of the original French settlers have, indeed, played a useful and worthy part in the life of modern Canada; but their influence has invariably been stable and conservative; all change and all advance, whether good or bad, has come from the more restless English immigrants from Britain and the United States.

It now remains to trace the steps by which the first pacification of the French in Canada was achieved under British rule; but it may be remarked, as an extraordinary example of the limitations of imperial statesmanship in the early years of George III., that the very government which was so liberal and so successful in dealing with its foreign subjects in Quebec was also responsible, and that during precisely the same period, for the narrow and repressive policy which drove the original British colonies to rebellion. The privileges of the French were protected and enlarged, while those of the English in America were restricted and withdrawn; the usual order of nature, in short, was reversed, for the British Government proved a devoted stepmother to its new children and a cruel mother to its old.

Illiberal Aims of British Settlers in Canada.

But the difficulties which faced the British administration in Canada were not long in showing. The provisional military rule which was established on the fall of Quebec and Montreal came to an end a few months after the Peace of Paris had been signed; and General James Murray, who had been in command since the death of Wolfe, assumed the office of first civil Governor of British Canada on 10th August 1764.[1] A serious outbreak of

[1] The commission of Murray was made out in London on 7th October 1763; but it did not reach him in Canada until 10th August 1764.

the redskins, known from the name of its leader as Pontiac's war, for a time threatened the colony with ruin; but when the rising—which was in part a result of the native unrest produced by the long strife between the two great European powers in America, and in part due to the intrigues of French settlers on the Mississippi—was suppressed, the British discontent at the terms granted to the French Canadians at once came to a head. It was the first sign of the struggle between the two races which was destined to distract Canada for exactly a century—from the year 1764 till the negotiations for federation in 1864.

The British population of Canada was as yet insignificant. It consisted, according to Murray, of some four hundred[1] men, 'most of them followers of the army, of mean education, or disbanded soldiers. All had their fortune to make, and few of them were solicitous about the means when the end could be obtained; the most immoral collection of men I ever knew.' They were all Protestants of the most bigoted Puritan type; they hated the French Catholicism of Quebec with the double hate of opposed nationality and religion; and they expected that, as representatives of the conquering race and the now dominant creed, they would reap the fruit of other men's toil. Canada, in short, was in their view to become an offshoot of New England, as New England itself would have become an offshoot of New France had the events of the Seven Years' War gone differently.

The first sign which this petty minority gave of their expectations and intentions was at the quarter sessions of Quebec in October 1764. Fourteen of the twenty men who formed the grand jury were British; and they issued a declaration that they should be consulted before any ordinance of the government became law, that the public accounts

[1] Carleton, in his evidence before the House of Commons on 2nd June 1774, stated that the Protestants in Canada numbered only three hundred and sixty.

should be presented to them twice a year, and that the courts of justice established by the Governor in Council were unconstitutional. As if the effrontery of these demands was not sufficient, they required that the Sabbath should be better observed, that it should not be profaned by buying and selling and 'idle amusements,' and that a learned clergy should be provided to preach the Gospel to the French Canadians —whose fervent religious belief was still regarded by the orthodox Protestants from New England as an unspeakable abomination. And, further, thirteen of the fourteen British jurymen added a protest against the presence of Catholics on the juries of the province as an 'open violation of our most sacred laws and liberty, tending to the entire subversion of the Protestant religion and His Majesty's authority.'

It would be difficult to imagine demands at once more senseless and more extravagant. The functions of a grand jury are altogether different from those of a parliament; yet these jurymen attempted to combine the two. And although the Imperial Government had ordered a general assembly to be convened 'so soon as the state and circumstances of the colonies would admit,' it was obviously impossible to carry out that recommendation within a few months of the termination of martial law.

Murray was assisted in the government by eight nominated councillors; but in the still unsettled state of the country, he could not have introduced those representative institutions which flourished in purely British communities, even had it been his desire and within his power to have done so. And the establishment of a parliament would have been a mere miserable farce in Quebec at that time. The French Canadians knew nothing and cared nothing for parliamentary rule, as indeed they cared nothing for trial by jury[1]; they only

[1] 'They thought it,' stated Carleton in evidence before the House of Commons in 1774, 'very extraordinary that English gentlemen should think their property safer in the determination of tailors and shoemakers than in that of the judges.'

desired an administration which should neither persecute nor rob them, but which should govern them quietly, and that without overmuch interference or change.

Such an administration they had obtained; and only the small British faction was desirous of its immediate subversion. Yet had a constitution been granted and a parliament been summoned, that faction would have been in a hopeless minority on any possible system of voting that did not altogether exclude the French; and it gives a sufficient measure of the political sagacity and tolerance of the three or four hundred British residents in Quebec that they contemplated confining the electorate to themselves, while the seventy thousand French Canadians were to remain disfranchised. 'Nothing,' wrote Murray, 'would satisfy these licentious fanatics save the expulsion of the Canadians, the bravest race on the globe, who, if indulged with a few privileges, would become the most faithful men in this American Empire.' The tactics of the British minority might have succeeded in eighteenth-century Ireland; happily, they failed altogether in Quebec. The imperial authorities had other plans for their new colony; and the three first Governors of Canada—James Murray, Guy Carleton, and Haldimand—were men of strong character, who maintained even justice throughout the province.[1]

Murray's firmness and impartiality soon made him unpopular with the British Canadians, who sent home a petition for his recall, complaining among other matters that he had been guilty of suggesting the appointment of some judges who could speak French, and that he did not attend church with sufficient regularity. The egregious folly of these grievances was their own best condemnation; but to the sorrow of the French, 'who had loved and respected his excellency

[1] Amherst, who had administered martial law in Canada between the conquest of 1761 and the peace of 1763, was also successful in gaining the confidence of the people. He 'behaved to us as a father rather than a conqueror,' said the people of Montreal.

even more on account of his personal qualities than as their governor,' Murray was recalled to England in June 1766, to explain the friction which had occurred.

It is possible that the British Canadians congratulated themselves on their success in obtaining Murray's removal. But if they anticipated that he would be displaced by a weak and unstable governor, they were soon bitterly disappointed; for General Guy Carleton, the future Lord Dorchester, was the very last man to give way to their pretensions without due cause.

Guy Carleton, Lord Dorchester, 1724-1808.

In the golden roll of the empire's greatest servants, the name of Guy Carleton will ever occupy a foremost place. He served his country for many years in circumstances of the greatest difficulty: to him is due, not only the sole guidance of Canada at a critical period, but its very preservation as a part of the British Empire; and from his lengthy connection, during nearly thirty years, with that colony while yet its destiny was undecided, may be traced many of the features which mark its subsequent history. Fearlessly honest and outspoken, a good soldier, a courteous gentleman and an impartial ruler, Guy Carleton did his duty wherever he was placed; and though his exploits may, perhaps, be overshadowed by some of the more brilliant but frequently less able and less upright administrators whom Britain has sent overseas, there is not one blot of crime, not one shadow of reproach, not one dimming of the scutcheon, in the record of that great name.

Guy Carleton was born at Strabane in Ireland on 3rd September 1724. Eighteen years later he entered the army; and in those days of incessant war he saw much service. With Wolfe he took part in the siege of Louisbourg; with Wolfe again he attacked Quebec, where he was wounded; and three years afterwards, in the campaign of 1762 against Havana, he was wounded a second time. On 24th September 1766, he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec

during Murray's absence; but Murray returned no more, and in the following year Carleton was invested with full power in the colony.

During four troubled years Carleton now remained in Canada, surmounting each of the many difficulties of the new colony as they arose. The Jesuits as well as the British traders were a source of trouble: the legal systems of Britain and France were hopelessly entangled; and serious abuses existed as regards the administration of the law, especially in the department relating to debtors. In one instance a debt of eleven livres amounted to eighty when the legal costs were added; the case was typical of many others. 'Every day,' wrote an ex-captain of militia in 1769, 'may be seen suit upon suit for nothing: for twenty or thirty sous suits are entered which usually mount up to forty, fifty, or sixty livres, owing to the multitude of expenses heaped on these poor people by the bailiffs appointed by the authority of the justices of the peace. These bailiffs are instigators of unjust suits; they entice the poor people, who know nothing of the matter, to get writs against one another. . . . It often happens that a single person has several citations to answer at different courts on the same day; and as it is impossible he can do so he is at once condemned by default, whereupon the bailiffs seize and carry off everything these poor people may be possessed of, the whole being disposed of at a half or a fourth of the real value.'

In these matters Carleton did his best for the people of Canada; and he set an excellent example to other colonial governors by resigning all claims to fees and perquisites, on the ground that the representative of the sovereign was lowered by their acceptance.

But it had already become evident that the problem of Canadian administration involved issues which could only be settled by the imperial parliament; and during the passing of the Quebec Act in 1774 the political centre of gravity

migrates temporarily from the farms and churches which lined the shores of the St. Lawrence to the Palace of Westminster beside the narrower Thames.

The fact that the British Government had now definitely taken Canadian affairs in hand did not at first sight look hopeful. In the year 1774 the ministry of which Lord North was premier was slowly but steadily driving the English colonies in America to rebellion by a series of unprecedented penal enactments; and while the children of Britain were thus ill-treated, there seemed little chance that the stranger within the gates of the empire would be conciliated. But by an unusual inversion of the ordinary course of politics, the very government which was arbitrary in its dealings with New England was generous towards the people of New France. The English were prepared for justice, and they were given tyranny; the French were prepared for tyranny, and they were given something more than justice. The English looked for the bread of completer citizenship, and they received merely the stone of taxation; the French looked for nothing, and they received privileges greater than had ever been theirs. It must always remain a standing wonder that the Boston Port Bill, which lost an old empire, and the Quebec Act, which preserved a new one, were the creation of the same hands and of the same session.

The Quebec Act, 1774.

The Quebec Act was introduced in the House of Lords on 2nd May 1774, and in the House of Commons three weeks later, where it was feebly criticised by a weak and disorganised opposition. The Bill was attacked on the ground that it favoured the Catholic religion at the expense of Protestantism, that it 'denied to English subjects the English birthright, trial by jury, and the most valuable of civil rights, the Habeas Corpus,' and that it extended the boundaries of British Canada far beyond the limits of old French Canada.

Charles Fox declared that the Bill appeared to show 'a settled design to enslave the people of America by establishing

a perfectly despotic government contrary to the genius and spirit of the British constitution'; Edmund Burke echoed his friend, prophesying that it would become 'an instrument of tyranny to the Canadians': other speakers followed generally the same line of argument. And in the Upper House Lord Chatham—now but the shadow of the brilliant William Pitt of twelve years before—denounced the measure in language of absurd violence, foretelling that it 'would involve a great country in a thousand difficulties, in the worst of despotism, and put the whole people under arbitrary power; it was a most cruel, oppressive, and odious measure, tearing up justice and every good principle by the roots. It was tyrannical and despotic, destructive of that liberty which ought to be the groundwork of every constitution, and open to ten thousand objections: it might shake the affections and confidence of the Protestants in England and Ireland, and finally lose the hearts of the king's American subjects.'

Such arguments, which appealed solely to the political and religious prejudices that were seldom lacking in England, proved of no effect whatever. They would have carried no real weight, even had the automatic majority of Lord North's administration been open to conviction in debate; and the evidence of Carleton, given at the bar of the House of Commons during the passage of the Bill, more than nullified any influence which the extravagant rhetoric of Burke and Fox might otherwise have had.

The idea that a government which had treated the French Canadians extremely well in the past was now preparing to tyrannise over them would have been ridiculed in Quebec. The statement that the Catholics were given advantage over the Protestants was incorrect; in any case the Protestants in Canada were a small and not very reputable body. For the purely English institutions of parliamentary government, trial by jury and the Habeas Corpus, not one Frenchman in

Canada cared a jot; and however valuable those institutions might be in England, the Quebec Act was designed to meet conditions in Canada and not in England. Its opponents fell into the too common error of supposing that the political medicine which had proved useful in English communities was a universal specific; and in so doing they showed a lack of that sympathetic insight which alone enables a statesman to understand and appreciate a different point of view and different conditions from those with which he is generally called upon to deal.

The chief provisions of the Quebec Act are quickly summarised. It stated that the Catholics of the colony might continue to profess their religion without let or hindrance, subject only to the king's supremacy. Their clergy might continue to 'hold, receive and enjoy their accustomed dues and rights, with respect to such persons only as should profess the said religion.' Due provision might also be made for the support of a Protestant clergy. With the exception of the religious orders, Canadian subjects might continue to hold their property under the old laws and customs of Canada. This was in effect a recognition of the French civil law in Canada; the English criminal law, which had already been introduced in the colony, and which, although barbarously severe, was much milder than that of France, was also to continue in operation. A Legislative Council was to be nominated, consisting of not more than twenty-three, or less than seventeen members: this council might make ordinances, with the consent of the governor; but it was not empowered to lay taxes, and its ordinances were to be approved by the king. No ordinances touching religion were to be enforced until the royal consent had been given. Finally, the boundaries of the province of Quebec were largely extended, so as to include the whole country which lay to the south of Canada and west of Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The Quebec Act was received with gratitude by the

Canadians, whose privileges it confirmed and extended; but it excited nothing save disgust among the older English colonies in America. The latter were already exasperated by the long controversy with Britain. Their more extreme politicians, who were now beginning openly to advocate secession from the empire, were willing and even anxious to seize upon any possible cause of agitation against the imperial government; and they were indignant that the Canadian boundary should be extended along the Ohio in a manner which cut off their own expansion into the interior.

In this matter, indeed, they appeared to have a legitimate ground of complaint, although the Quebec Act expressly stated that the new boundary should not 'in any wise affect the boundaries of any other colony.' The measure thus contradicted itself; and it is not improbable that a lack of definite geographical knowledge as to the backwoods of America had as much to do with the change of boundary as any desire to hamper the growth of the English colonies. But in any case the secessionist party imputed it for evil to the authors of the new law. They were also displeased with the religious freedom which was wisely granted to the French Catholics, forgetful of the fact that that freedom had been solemnly guaranteed by the Treaty of Paris in 1763, and that their own ancestors had in many cases emigrated from England to secure a similar measure of liberty. It suited their purpose, in fact, to condemn the Quebec Act; and they condemned it unreservedly.

Canada and the Imperial Civil War, 1775-83.

There can be no doubt that these considerations were among the many subsidiary causes of the Imperial Civil War, which broke out the year after the Quebec Act had been placed on the statute book. But although the Act was an additional irritant to the English colonists, its rejection by the British parliament would not have prevented the Imperial Civil War; and its enactment was not without effect in deciding the attitude of the

French Canadian subjects of the Crown during the ensuing struggle.

The situation in which the latter found themselves placed on the outbreak of war in 1775 was, indeed, one of exceptional difficulty. The split of empire necessarily put a heavy strain upon the loyalty of the French Canadians. It is true that they had been well treated by the imperial authorities. But the short period of twelve years of British rule had not induced in them any excessive love of the nation which had conquered them : they might remain neutral, they could not reasonably be expected to be enthusiastic in a quarrel which was not only not of their making, but no concern of theirs.

Yet, on the other hand, they hated the people of New England. The men of Massachusetts and Connecticut had invaded and ravaged Quebec in earlier days. They had done their utmost to reduce the French power in Canada ; and having seen it reduced, they had endeavoured to tyrannise over those who were now their fellow-subjects by claiming the whole government of the province as their prerogative. In that attempt they had been foiled, thanks solely to the British Government and its representatives in Quebec ; and the fact was not forgotten by the French Canadians.

But even had the latter, despite all their gratitude to the British, thrown in their lot with their old enemies and against their new benefactors, they still stood to lose much and to gain nothing. They would have had to share the fortunes of war with their more powerful neighbours ; and in these circumstances, if the seceding colonies had failed, the Canadians would also have failed ; while as defeated rebels they could not expect the same easy terms from their conqueror that they had formerly received as the defeated subjects of an independent empire.

If, on the other hand, the rebellion succeeded, the Canadians would have been worse off than before. They would still not be independent, but subject to New England instead of

to Britain. And they knew enough of the temper of Boston to realise that there would be nothing but loss in that exchange of masters. The two things which the French Canadians valued most in the world were the Catholic religion and the customs of old France: they were well aware that neither would be safe under the aggressively Protestant and modern commercial temper of New England.

Quebec had, therefore, every reason to remain loyal. But reason is no more decisive in determining the actions of states than of individuals; and the desperate efforts which were now made by the rebels to induce the Canadians to join them might conceivably have been successful had it not been for the firm hand which Carleton kept upon the province.

No stone was left unturned, no means were left untried, to induce the French to revolt. Inflammatory proclamations inciting to rebellion were issued from the printing presses of Boston and Philadelphia, and posted at dead of night by mysterious, unknown hands on the doors of the Canadian churches. The agents of the republic infested every village along the St. Lawrence, alternately cajoling and threatening the inhabitants. Freedom and assistance were promised to those who threw off the yoke of slavery; and the sword of the avenger was denounced on the cowards who meekly submitted to the British tyrants at the critical time when the rights of man were endangered and the friends of liberty in peril.

Much more of the same fustian rhetoric was poured upon the devoted heads of the French Canadians during the early months of the civil war. But they remained strangely, and from the rebel point of view, irritatingly calm under its influence. Their intelligence, like that of most peasants, was slow and limited; they were extremely credulous, but they possessed a certain amount of stolid common sense which enabled them to resist without much difficulty the blandishments of the Americans. They knew nothing of the ex-

travagant metaphors common to English political discussion; they were conscious of no yoke of slavery, and they were absolutely indifferent to the rights of man. A good deal of the persuasion and many of the threats were probably lost on them altogether; they cared nothing for the constitutional merits of the discussion, but they were intimately concerned to preserve the security of their own homes. And that security would have vanished had they risen in revolt against their rulers.

Had their priests, indeed, given the signal to rebel, the peasants would have obeyed, and the whole of the British territories in America might thereby have been lost: but the priests gave no such signal. The Catholics of Quebec had no reason to love the Puritans of New England; they soon showed that they had no intention whatever of risking their lives and such small fortunes as they possessed by coming to the assistance of their old enemies.

In the year 1776 a detachment of the rebel army invaded Canada under the leadership of Benedict Arnold. That brilliant commander had hoped, and his troops had confidently expected, that their appearance would be the means of raising the province against the British; but they were doomed to a speedy and severe disappointment. They received no active reinforcements from the French; indeed they obtained no countenance at all: and when the expedition fell back defeated from an attack on the fortress of Quebec, the real menace to Canada was over.

The hostility of the French had been too undisguised to admit of further delusions on the part of the secessionist leaders; it was evident to the most ardent advocate of republicanism and rebellion that those doctrines did not take kindly to the soil of Quebec. During the remaining campaigns of the war Canada, therefore, suffered inconvenience rather than actual danger; and although the United States put forward a claim

Canada confirmed to Britain, 1783.

to its possession during the negotiations for peace in 1783, the demand was too absurd to be pressed. It was a fortunate thing for the republic that it was not burdened with the government of a bitterly unfriendly people during the first doubtful and troubled years of its existence; it was not less fortunate for the future of Canada that the liberal policy of the British and the consequent gratitude of the French had combined to ensure its continuance within the empire.

The United Empire Loyalists, 1784.

The civil war was over; but a side-issue of the conflict was yet to have an important influence upon what remained of British North America. Hitherto the struggle had been a source of weakness to Canada; it was now to prove indirectly a source of strength. Hitherto such inhabitants of English origin as Quebec had known had brought little credit either to their motherland or their adopted country; the colony was now to see the English pioneer at his best. Hitherto Canada had been mainly French in character and population; it was now to undergo a change which in time made it predominantly English. The expulsion of the United Empire Loyalists from the United States was a serious and permanent loss to the republic; their settlement north of the St. Lawrence was a permanent and important gain to Canada.

It has been calculated[1] that about a million of the three million inhabitants of the British colonies in America, while they agreed with the extremists in disapproving the king's policy towards his oversea possessions, disapproved even more strongly of the armed rebellion which opposed that policy. They had the misfortune to choose the losing side, and they had to pay the usual penalty of the mistake. From the first they were pitilessly persecuted by the advocates of separation; and they had no effectual means of retorting upon their tormentors.

[1] See the article by Mr. Tyler, *American Historical Review*, 1896.

The temper of the times was harsh and stern towards those who were soon branded as the advocates of slavery and absolutism. 'Why should persons who are preying upon the vitals of their country,' wrote Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, 'be suffered to remain at large whilst we know they will do us every mischief in their power?' The question was quickly answered in the way that Trumbull wished; Acts of banishment were passed by the several states of the union, and all who had made a decided stand against the rebellion were ordered into exile.

By a law of the Massachusetts Legislature, three hundred and eight persons of the oldest and most wealthy families in the province were banned the country in May 1778; among their number were included sixty graduates of Harvard and many of the leading professional men of Boston. New Hampshire in like manner banished seventy-six of its citizens, and Pennsylvania nearly five hundred: the other members of the confederacy followed suit. In every case the property of the loyalists was confiscated; death was the penalty denounced upon them if they dared to return.

Such measures may have been justified by the critical condition of the war and the weakness of which the rebels were only too conscious among themselves; but in many districts where feeling ran particularly high and the rule of the mob prevailed, the loyalists had to suffer more pronounced hardships. Their houses were plundered and burnt. They and their families were seized and dragged through horse-ponds, or bespattered with filth and slime. Some were hanged, and their bodies exhibited by the roadside as a warning to their fellows; others were hunted from place to place, and rewards offered for their capture dead or alive. Occasionally more ingenious forms of torture were devised; in one case, at least, a victim had his 'head and eyebrows shaved, tarred and feathered; a hog-yoke put upon his neck, and a cow-bell thereon; upon his head a very high hat and

feathers, and a sheet of paper in front, representing the traitor Arnold and the devil.'

It is probable that the better classes among the republicans regretted these outrages. But they were powerless to intervene, or fearful of calling down the popular vengeance upon their own heads should they protest. And it cannot be denied that the persecution was often effectual.

Some of the weaker among the loyalists surrendered their principles to save their property. Others abandoned their adherence to the king when the king's soldiers failed to discriminate between loyalists and rebels. Others, again, deserted the losing side or were dragooned into acquiescence with the republic. Many made their way to England; but they found small comfort there. The hand of charity, complained one of the exiles, was very cold; 'the better sort of gentry were too proud or reserved to mix with those whom they did not know.' Nor was mere neglect the only disappointment that awaited the refugees. And it was the more bitter, because so utterly unexpected, to discover that 'the conceited islanders' in England despised all the colonists indiscriminately, whether loyalists or republicans; some of the exiles, indeed, were jeered at in the streets of London as 'damned American rebels,' and treated in a way which made them regret they had not deserved the reproach.

But apart from these defections, there was still left a large and respectable body of men in the United States, whose fealty to the empire and the king no misfortunes and no ill-treatment from friend or foe could shatter. Their total number was, perhaps, about forty thousand[1]; and these loyalists, despoiled of their property, in some cases banished under penalty of death by the very legislatures of which they had once been honoured members, universally hated and despised by their old neighbours, and in so desperate a plight that

[1] The numbers given by different historians vary considerably, and there are no exact figures. I have adopted a minimum estimate.

George Washington thought they could do nothing better than commit suicide—these loyalists now left their homes and sought another dwelling under the British flag.

To a man they carried with them an abiding hatred of the United States and of republican institutions; to a man they were devotedly attached to the British Empire and to monarchy. There is no loyalty so deep as that which proves itself in suffering, no love so constant as that which spends itself in pain.

The loyalists had come from every part of the United States; they were soon scattered through every part of the British Empire. Some of the refugees emigrated to the West Indies. Very many went to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Several families planted themselves in Lower Canada between Quebec and Montreal, where they cultivated their lands by the side of the French *seigneurs* and peasants, and intermarried with their new neighbours.[1] The great majority, however, proceeded further up the St. Lawrence, settling themselves in the then unpopulated territory which is now called the province of Ontario, but which was, for many years after the first British pioneers traversed its soil, known simply as Upper Canada in distinction to the Lower Canada that had long been the central colony of New France.

Foundation of Ontario or Upper Canada, 1784.

Ontario was the loyalist child of the Imperial Civil War, as the United States were its rebel sons; the new province of the empire, which was the first English province of Canada, was founded in the double strength of fealty and freedom.

The great territory which was thus marked out for British settlement was at that time one vast forest from east to west, from the city of Montreal on its eastern frontier to its uncer-

[1] A Scottish colony, founded some years before in the Baie St. Paul district of Quebec, became in time wholly French through intermarriage, as the old English colonies in Ireland had often become wholly Irish in sympathy and language within two generations.—Bradley's *Making of Canada*. But intermarriage was exceptional; see bk. xi. ch. iii. and iv.

tain boundary beyond the great lakes of the West. On its level and well-watered plains nature had planted a numberless variety of trees, hardly equalled even in that enchanted shady grove through which the gentle knight of the *Faerie Queene* conducted the innocent fair lady whom he loved. The elm, the ash, and the chestnut; the sobbing pine, the mournful cedar; the timorous aspen and the solid oak; the gorgeous maple and the ragged willow: these and many others disputed in endless profusion the virgin soil of Ontario.

Few travellers had ever penetrated that fertile land of wood and water. The route to the West, along which a century of fur-traders had tramped, lay northwards by the Ottawa River. Southwards an occasional explorer had made his way; but few outposts of civilisation yet marked the wilderness. The French had built a fort at Niagara in 1679; Detroit had been founded between Erie and Huron in 1702, and now counted some thousand inhabitants; another settlement had been made at Fort Frontenac, on whose site stands modern Kingston. Religion and commerce had met in Gallic mission and trading station at Sault Sainte Marie below Superior, and the wooden forts of the English Hudson's Bay Company lay far to the north. For the rest, there was nothing save primeval forest to greet the adventurer who forced a path through Ontario in the year 1784.

The soil of the country, according to the invariable provision of British law, belonged wholly to the Crown; but the Crown was not forgetful of those who had suffered for it. Land and money were freely granted; supplies were sent out from England, and the people were maintained until they could maintain themselves. Both the Government and the king took an active and personal interest in the welfare of the United Empire Loyalists. A full list of the settlers was ordered to be made out and preserved in the Crown Lands Department, 'to the end that their posterity might be discriminated' by a special mark of honour from the ordinary

immigrants into the colony. Altogether some three million pounds sterling was expended on their behalf.

There was now to be seen in Ontario a process resembling in many respects that which had taken place in Britain itself several centuries before, when the great forest of Anderida, which stretched unbroken across chalk-backed Sussex, and onwards through the hills and vales of Surrey to the sinuous Thames, had given way before the industry of man. A record of the gradual clearing of that sylvan mystery of Old England, the refuge of the robber and the outlaw, the fabled haunt of elf and fay, may yet be read on the map of the southern counties: in the cuttings of the woodmen which formed the fields and leighs at Mayfield, Uckfield, and Amberley; in relics of the pioneering drovers who pastured their cattle and gave their names to such places as Slinfold and Chiddingfold; in the iron-mines of the Weald which were worked with timber brought from the hursts or still uncleared forest at Crowhurst and Lamberhurst.

Mile by mile the forest had fallen in Britain; mile by mile it now fell before man in the West. Into this land of Ontario the United Empire Loyalists came in 1784 and the following years. They arrived in single families or in small parties, or even one by one; they brought with them, not only many memories of harsh treatment suffered at the hands of ardent republican mobs, but also of hardships and perils on the way. They were still to suffer severe privations; but the immigrants were sturdy men who made light of labour. It was remarked as a feat of strength that one of the pioneers was able to fell an acre of standing timber in four days; yet though such physical capacity was probably rare, the spirit to equal it was present in all.

Hardships of the Loyalists.

With industry of this kind, the ground on an allotment was quickly cleared and partly sown with corn; a rough log-hut would be run up within a week or two, so primitive, perhaps,

in its construction that the stumps of trees still rooted in the ground were used for seats in the house, while oiled paper became a temporary substitute for glass windows. And clothing was at first more useful than decorative. The men often used animal skins; the women wore dresses, durable rather than beautiful, made of buck leather.

But in these rude dwellings many of the settlers now preserved with jealous care memories of earlier days before trouble had driven them from older and more comfortable homes. With infinite trouble, odd household relics, valued chiefly as tokens of the past, had been transported through the wilderness; and an antique pewter plate, a stout oak chair, a curiously patterned spinning-wheel, or even an old ledger, were among the articles which adorned the first homesteads of Ontario, and which were to serve as heirlooms for coming generations.[1]

The first years were full of bitter struggles. The rough huts in which the settlers lived were but a poor protection against the rigours of a Canadian winter. The summer heat was made pestilential by swarms of mosquitoes, bred in the still undrained swamps of Ontario; malaria stalked the land, and little protection was available against disease of any kind. The cattle were sometimes carried off by wild beasts; the crops were not always successful. Famine at times came near: cases were known when men offered a thousand acres for a bushel of potatoes, and a well-gnawed beef-bone was gladly accepted by neighbours who had no meat. And the conveniences of civilised life, to some at least of which the settlers had been accustomed in earlier days, were almost impossible to obtain in a remote corner of the wilderness; even if transport had been feasible, the cost would have been too great for their limited means.

Nature is slow to give up her empire of the wilds; but to

[1] Some curious details of these relics may be found in the *Transactions of the United Empire Loyalists' Association*, 1897, etc.

those who subdue her is granted a not inadequate reward. Physical strength and moral steadfastness are essential to the man who would struggle successfully with the elements; yet if he conquers he reaps not only the consequences of his toil, but he passes on his own enduring characteristics, stamped indelibly on their lineaments, to his sons. And while he has made a home, they may make a nation.

In this task the pioneers of Ontario were unconsciously engaged; but their exuberant loyalty determined that for all time Upper Canada should bear its British origin and fealty plainly marked upon the map. A firm belief in monarchy was indicated in the names given to towns and townships in Ontario, as the Puritans of New England a century and a half before had marked their reliance on the Bible when they gave their settlements such names as Providence and Salem.

Kingston, the king's town, was the chief, as it was the first, centre of loyalist influence in Ontario. And the thirteen children of George III. served a more useful purpose in Canada, by giving their names to thirteen new townships, than ever they did in England by their lives; while the ingenuity of successive governors and settlers was employed in naming each new district after some town or celebrity at home.

The results were occasionally curious. The Canadian city of London, which stands on the Ontarian Thames, has not yet outgrown the older capital in size or population; but Toronto, which in its earlier years was known as York, has far outdistanced the English rival whose name it has dropped for its own more sonorous aboriginal title. The districts of Carleton and Haldimand, and the Lake Simcoe, recall the first administrators of British Canada; elsewhere English and Scottish names—Peterborough, Hull, Perth, Lanark, and Cornwall—mingle incongruously with the Berlin that shows the site of a German colony, the Haliburton that commemorates a great Canadian family, the Galt that recalls a Scottish

pioneer, and the Waterloo that indicates the settlement of that particular district shortly after the date of the great battle.

Clearing, planting, and building went on month after month; hardships became less year by year. But other signs beyond those of material progress were soon given that Ontario was an English colony. The French Canadians had shown themselves content to be ruled by governor and council, so long as governor and council ruled them well; the new English Canadians did not suffer their loyalty to the king to interfere with their love of a parliament.

Petitions for a Constitution, 1784-8.

On 24th November 1784, when the United Empire Loyalists had been but a few months in the colony, a petition for a free constitution was sent to England. Its chief points were a request for a House of Representatives or an Assembly, and power to impose taxes to cover the expenses of civil government; for a Council of not less than thirty members, without whose advice no official should be suspended, and no new office be created by the governor; for a continuance of the criminal law of England, and of the ancient laws regarding landed estates, marriage settlements, and inheritances; and for the Habeas Corpus Act.

The petition purported to come from both French and English settlers in Canada; but the French soon made it clear that they had little to do with it. Very few French names appeared among the signatories; a counter-petition from the French-Canadian *seigneurs* and others deprecated the idea of a constitution as aiming 'at innovations entirely opposed to the rights of the king and of his government, and (likely) to detach the people from the submission they have always shown to their sovereign.'

Other petitions on either side came in from time to time; the English residents sent a delegate to the imperial parliament in 1788 to expound their claims: and it was soon

evident that a clear-cut racial division existed on the subject. Every Englishman desired the grant of a constitution as his legitimate political right; every Frenchman of any influence opposed it as an unnecessary danger.

The position was impartially summed up by Carleton, Lord Dorchester, in an official despatch dated 8th November 1788. He considered that the demand for an Assembly came from the commercial classes, that was to say, from the towns, where the British were most numerous: he compared their numbers with the French as one to fifteen, or exclusive of the towns as one to forty; including the English settlements above Montreal their numbers were as one to five. The *seigneurs* and country gentlemen were opposed to an Assembly; the clergy were neutral: and the French farmers, 'who might be styled the main body of the freeholders of the country, having little or no education, were unacquainted with the nature of the question, and would, he thought, be for or against it, according to their confidence in the representations of others.' He believed, too, that a division of the province was 'by no means advisable at present, nor did he see an immediate call for other regulations. . . . Indeed, the western settlements were as yet unprepared for any organisation superior to that of a county.' But should a division be decided on, there was no reason why the inhabitants of the western district should not have 'an Assembly, and so much of the English system of laws as might suit their local situation and condition.'

The views thus expressed by the governor were adopted in the main by the British Government. It was decided that the province should be divided into two parts, the one division being almost wholly French, the other wholly English in character. The constitution of Quebec or Lower Canada was to be assimilated to that of Britain 'as nearly as the difference arising from the manners of the people and from the present situation of the

A Constitution determined on, 1789.

province would admit,' due attention being given to the 'prejudices and habits of the French inhabitants,' and to their civil and religious rights. And the constitution of Ontario or Upper Canada was to secure to that essentially English district, in the words of Simcoe, its first lieutenant-governor, a system which was 'the very image and transcript of that of Great Britain.'

But with the best will in the world, the Canadian constitution could not be altogether assimilated to that of England.

Difficulties of the Problem.

Despite its political theory of popular representation, the government and the social life of England were still fundamentally aristocratic; the social life of Canada, on the other hand, was fundamentally and increasingly democratic.[1] Free grants of uncleared land to every settler ensured an almost absolute equality in Ontario; an aristocracy cannot flourish in a country where every man tills his own soil. And although the French in Quebec still had their *seigneurs*, and many of the feudal customs yet survived from old French rule, the influence of the *seigneurs* was rapidly diminishing; and the testimony of a lieutenant-governor of the province ten years later showed that there was 'not a more independent race of people, nor in any part of the world a country in which equality was so nearly established.'

The imperial government, however, saw clearly enough the necessity of a second or Upper Chamber which should operate as a check on the instability of the popular or Lower Assembly. But a second chamber must necessarily have something exclusive or aristocratic in its composition; and the old difficulty—which had baffled Shaftesbury and Locke in their famous but abortive constitution of Carolina,[2] and has baffled successive generations of constitution-makers ever since—at once appeared. How was it possible to create an

[1] 'Several causes at present unite in daily lessening the power and influence of the aristocratical body in Lower Canada.'—Lieut.-Governor Milnes to the Duke of Portland, 1st November 1800.

[2] See vol. i. bk. iv. ch. iii.

Upper Chamber essentially aristocratic in its composition, in a colony essentially democratic in its institutions ?

The method proposed by the imperial government was for an Upper Chamber or Legislative Council to be instituted, whose members should be appointed for life and during good behaviour, provided that they resided in the province. Upon those who were thus appointed it was intended to confer ' some mark of honour, such as a provincial baronetage, either personal to themselves or descendible to their eldest sons in lineal succession ' ; and in after years, should there be a great increase of wealth in the colony, it was suggested that it might be possible to ' raise the most considerable of these persons to a higher degree of honour.' The general aim was ' both to give to the Upper Branch of the Legislature a greater degree of weight and consequence than was possessed by the Councils in the old colonial governments, and to establish in the provinces a body of men having that motive of attachment to the existing form of government which arises from the possession of personal or hereditary distinction.'

The idea may have been theoretically good ; but it was open to the grave criticism that in actual practice it would have proved unworkable. It was vigorously opposed by Carleton, than whom no man knew better the conditions of the colony ; and the objections were summarised by him in a masterly despatch dated 8th February 1790. He admitted, indeed, that ' many advantages might result from an hereditary Legislative Council, distinguished by some mark of honour, did the condition of the country concur in supporting this dignity ; but the fluctuating state of property would expose all hereditary honours to fall into disregard. For the present, therefore, it would seem more advisable to appoint the members during life, good behaviour, and residence in the province. The number for Upper Canada to be not less than seven and not more than fifteen, to be increased as the wealth and population of the country may require. To give them as

much consequence as possible they should be selected among the men of property, where talents, integrity, and a firm attachment to the unity of the empire may be found.'

The advice was sound; but it involved too radical a departure from the traditions of English social order to be acted on by the authorities at home. The Canada Bill, as finally introduced in the imperial parliament on 4th March 1791, by the premier, William Pitt the younger, contained among its clauses a provision empowering the Crown to establish a hereditary aristocracy in Canada.

The Canadian Constitution, 1791.

Yet time proved Carleton's objection to be well founded. The permissive clause remained a dead letter; the exotic plant refused to flourish on the soil of the new world.

The measure was amended in certain respects, the duration of the Assemblies being reduced from seven years to four, and the number of members of the Assembly in Lower Canada raised from thirty to fifty. With these alterations, the Bill passed through parliament, and received the royal assent on 10th June 1791.

Its imperfections, omissions, and redundancies were to be fully brought out by the working of the next fifty years; but the Bill itself was a wise one. It conferred representative rather than responsible government, and in that lay the seed of much future discontent and popular agitation; but Canada was not yet sufficiently advanced to possess full control of its destiny, and it is doubtful whether political opinion in England was ready to contemplate such a step forward as was possible in the following century.

But whatever faults were eventually found to exist in this first Canadian constitution, its promulgation in 1791 showed how profoundly the lesson of the revolt of the old English colonies had sunk into the heart of the imperial government. The change in the theory of administration had indeed been fundamental. Less than thirty

Its Imperial Importance.

years before, George Grenville had imposed the stamp duties on the reluctant Americans, and with that Act had inaugurated the evil policy which led to the civil war and the disruption of the empire.

His youngest son was now a member of the Cabinet; and 'I am persuaded,' the latter wrote in the private letter accompanying the public despatch of 20th October 1789, in which the draft of the proposed constitution was sent, 'that it is a point of true policy to make these concessions at a time when they may be received as a matter of favour, and when it is in our own power to regulate and direct the manner of applying them, rather than to wait till they shall be extorted from us by a necessity which shall neither leave us any discretion in the form nor any merit in the substance of what we give.'

On those broad lines the political development of the empire was henceforth to run; the words of the younger Grenville, which summarise the true liberal policy of statesmanship,[1] were to serve as the charter of nations yet unborn.

The Quebec Act of 1774 was the charter of the French Canadians. The Canada Act of 1791 was the charter of the English Canadians. The former measure secured the privileges of the alien subjects of the empire; the latter secured the rights of the English colonists. And the voluntary recognition of those rights, which grew fuller and more definite when occasion served in later years, became the standard doctrine which was to form the basis of every future constitution of the English people overseas.

The Two Provinces.

With the division of Canada into the two provinces of Quebec and Ontario, of Lower and Upper Canada, British North America, as we know it, began to take shape in modern form. The Dominion was still in embryo, the Canadian nation was still unborn; the various

[1] I need hardly say that the expression is used in its natural and not its party sense. The Acts of 1774 and 1791 were both introduced by Tory governments.

settlements still felt the tie of sectional and individual interests, and were hardly yet conscious of the need of union.

But the need was there; and the grandchildren of the first pioneers in Ontario were to prove that union could be achieved by those who remained within the empire not less easily and not less thoroughly than by those who had seceded to form an independent republic.

Book X

THE CALL OF THE WEST: 1587-1860

CHAPTER I

THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE: 1587-1848[1]

Two centuries before the first English settlers in Ontario began the felling of the forests which covered the vast plains that stretch across Eastern Canada, other pioneers of the same nation had begun to explore a different part of what is now the same Dominion.

But it was not Canada, nor, indeed, any territory of the western hemisphere, for which these maritime adventurers sought. The very name of Canada was scarcely known in Europe at that day; the uncertain maps of North America still marked the whole continent as a grotesque chain of islands

[1] Authorities.—*The Search for the Western Seas*, by Lawrence J. Burpee, traces the earlier history of the voyages for the North-West Passage. It is not, however, exhaustive in detail, and leaves much information to be sought elsewhere. Hakluyt and Purchas contain the travels of the older voyagers; see also the publications of the Hakluyt Society and Sir Humphrey Gilbert's *Discourse of a Discoverie for a New Passage to Cataja*. Frobisher's *True Discourses*, Asher's *Henry Hudson the Navigator*, and Markham's *Voyages of William Baffin* are indispensable. Henry Ellis published an account of the *Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage*, 1746-7, in 1748. Captain Smith's description of his expedition appeared the same year.

For Franklin, the *Life* by H. D. Traill; McClintock's *Voyage of the Fox*; McCormick's *Expedition in Search of Sir John Franklin*. See also Sir John Richardson; Franklin's own narratives of his earlier expeditions; Markham's *Life of Admiral Sir Leopold McClintock*; and Sherard Osborn, *The Discovery of a North-West Passage*.

The authorities quoted in the second chapter should also be consulted; Amundsen's *North-West Passage*, a translation of which was published in 1908, gives an excellent account of the final voyage of discovery.

that reached vaguely from Greenland to Florida. Not these, but the wealth of the orient, was the magnet which, in the Tudor age of England, led our adventurers to brave storm, starvation, and oftentimes death itself, in the search for the North-East and North-West Passages to the courts and marts of Asia.

They sought the East; they found the West. They hoped to trade with an old nation in Asia, but unwittingly they helped instead to build a new nation in America. They laid down their lives in a quest that failed; but the defeated purpose was not without its unseen reward for later generations.

The search for the North-East Passage failed, it is true, almost from the beginning; the loss of the Willoughby expedition in 1553 seemed at once to wreck the hope of navigating the terrible shores of Northern Siberia.[1] Only Holland followed England's lead in that direction; and years later the crews of some Dutch vessels wintered in the wild desolation of Spitsbergen. But they also were compelled to turn back baffled and defeated; and though Henry Hudson likewise endeavoured, first in the service of the English Muscovite Company and subsequently in that of the Dutch East India Company, to force his way through, he returned from his voyage in 1608 for the former corporation 'out of hope,' while in 1609 his Dutch crew mutinied when they reached Nova Zembla, and insisted on his return.

The true Asiatic route to the Far East lay overland, and it was perforce left to the Russian explorers of the eighteenth century to track a path across the flats and tundras that stretch in vast distances from the Urals to the Pacific. In 1878, indeed, Nordenskjöld, a Finn of Swedish ancestry, who subsequently settled in Sweden, achieved the navigation of the North-East Passage. But it was practically useless when discovered, and from the time of Hudson, English sailors attempted it no more.

[1] See vol. i. bk. i. ch. iii.

The North-West Passage seemed to offer more definite chances of success. Though one expedition after another failed to reach that western ocean which should open the way to the East, there were always seamen ready to start, and patrons ready to assist, in pursuit of the elusive channel. Even when the contemporaries of Hakluyt discovered that it was high time to leave the frozen north, and to proceed on those voyages in temperate and tropic seas which resulted in the founding of British settlements in America, which inaugurated trading-stations on the dismal, unhealthy West African coast, and on the more favoured Indian shores that were the aim of every European nation; even then there still remained some navigators for whom the North-West possessed an abiding fascination. The call of the West, which was as yet but the call of the Further East, was obeyed.

The three north-westerly voyages that Martin Frobisher made in 1576 and the two following years added little to geographical knowledge. But in August 1587, a gentleman and sea-captain of Dartmouth in Devon, John Davis, or Davys, by name, explored the waters of the strait which has ever since been called after him. In doing so he had passed the eastern entrance of the channel which led to the then unknown Hudson Bay, and had been astounded there to 'see the sea falling down into the gulf with a mighty overfall and roaring, and with divers circular motions like whirlpools.' Davis did not, however, navigate that perilous passage, but followed his 'course in the free and open sea between north and north-west to the latitude of 67 degrees north,' and there, he wrote, 'I might see America west from me and Desolation east; then when I saw the land of both sides I began to distrust it would prove but a gulf.'

Martin Frobisher and John Davis, 1576-87.

His difficulties now increased, and 'being forsaken and left in distress, referring myself to the merciful providence of God, I shaped my course for England; and unhoped for of any,

God alone relieving me, I arrived at Dartmouth.' Henceforth Davis sailed in kindlier waters, fighting the Spaniards in the southern seas which they had made their own; yet the fact that his three voyages in search of the North-West Passage were almost fruitless did nothing to deter others from following in his steps.

He was soon followed in those parts by one Weymouth, or Winwood, who sailed as far as Charles Island in the Hudson Strait in 1602. The next great voyages, however, in search of the North-West Passage were those of Hudson and Baffin. But it is to John Davis that we owe such reminders of his time as Gilbert Sound and Mount Raleigh, and of his county as Exeter and Totnes Sounds, on the maps of modern Canada.

Henry Hudson, the date of whose birth and whose parentage are alike uncertain, was employed in 1607 by the English Muscovite Company 'to discover the pole,' and thence to find a passage to India. Sailing on 1st May of that year, his westerly course was diverted by currents, and he was swept eastwards to Spitsbergen. His next voyages to the north-east both failed as we have seen; but in a third expedition, after returning from Nova Zembla, he coasted the American shores, and sailed up the river which still bears his name until near where the city of Albany now stands, on the chance that that great stream might prove to be the long-sought passage.

Henry Hudson, 1607-10.

The hope was vain; but, nothing daunted, Hudson again sailed westwards on the same quest from London on 17th April 1610. His ship, the *Discovery*, touched at Iceland and thence proceeded up the Davis Strait; but storms beat down upon the little vessel, and impenetrable ice-fields now blocked the way. The crew were restless, and Hudson, who was either not a great leader or was peculiarly unfortunate in his men—the former supposition seems more probable—was faced with disaffection on this fourth voyage as on his third. 'Some of our men fell sick,' wrote Prickett, whose none too trustworthy

narrative remains almost the sole authority, apart from the meagre official journal of Hudson, for this disastrous expedition; 'I will not say it was for fear, although I saw small sign of other grief.'

For the time, however, Hudson was able to control the crew. Reaching Ungava Bay, he gave the name of Desire Provoketh to the present Akpatok Island; and beating thence further up the Hudson Strait to the Isles of God's Mercies, whose identity is now uncertain, he pressed onwards through 'a great and whurling sea,' past Cape Wostenholme into the Hudson Bay.

How much of the inland sea that is called after Hudson's name was explored by its discoverer remains unknown, but in the shallow waters of James Bay the *Discovery* fetched up for the winter. The district seemed 'a labyrinth without end' to Prickett; but a hut was constructed on the neighbouring shore, though not until the carpenter had been called 'many foul names' and threatened with hanging. An abortive attempt was made to trade with a native, who promised to 'come again (but) went his way (and) never came more,' and provisions were only obtained with difficulty, the men going 'into the woods, hilles and valleyes, for all things that had any show of substance in them, so vile soever; the mosse of the ground, than the which I take the powder of a post to be much better, and the frogge, in his engendering time as loathsome as a toad, was not spared.'

But when at length the long winter was over, there were not a fortnight's victuals left on board. No bread remained, and only five cheeses and a bag of ship's biscuit. The discontent which had simmered for months now boiled over: the men mutinied, and Hudson was overpowered. 'Then was the shallop haled up to the ship side, and the poor, sick, and lame men were called upon to get them out of their cabins into the shallop.' With these eight companions was Hudson set adrift; neither he nor they were ever heard of more. Prickett

was spared : ' On my knees I besought them,' he wrote, ' for the love of God to remember themselves, and to do as they would be done unto. They bade me keep myself well, and get me into my cabin.' After many sufferings, and the murder of four of the crew by Eskimos, the *Discovery* at last reached Plymouth.

The miserable end of Hudson seemed only to quicken the zeal of those who followed him. Within a few months after the return of the mutineers, in April 1612, Sir Thomas Button sailed for the North-West ; and so confident were his supporters of success that he was provided with a letter to the Emperor of Japan, in which James I. stated that, should the Mikado give encouragement and protection to the English travellers, ' we shall be ready to requite it with the like goodwill towards any of yours that shall have cause or desire to visit our countries.'

Button, Baffin, and others, 1612-31.

But the bleak western shores of Hudson Bay abruptly stayed Button's further progress. ' Hopes Checkt ' was the significant name he gave to the endless barrier which faced him ; and after wintering in the bay with his two ships, the *Discovery* and *Resolution*—the former was Hudson's old vessel, and the names of both curiously anticipated those of Captain Cook—he returned to England.

In addition to his original quest, Button had been charged to discover some convenient spot ' on the back of America, or some island in the South Sea, for a haven or stacon for our shippes and merchaundizes.' Here, too, he had necessarily failed ; but again others were ready to follow. One Gibbons sailed north-west in 1614, and a Captain Hawkridge—of whom nothing but the name survives—apparently followed three years later.

A ' Company of the Merchants of London Discoverers of the North-West Passage ' had been formed, with Henry, Prince of Wales, as patron ; and when these expeditions added little to their knowledge, William Baffin, ' a navigator

of exceptional ability and character,' was sent out in March 1615. After careful investigation, his final conclusion was that ' there is no passage nor hope of passage, in the north of Davis Strait,' and though the name of Baffin Bay still recalls his voyage, the rest of Baffin's life was spent more profitably in the East India trade.

A Danish expedition under Jens Munk appeared in Hudson Bay in 1619, but out of a crew of sixty-four only three returned home. They found nothing of any value ; the next English voyages, however, were more fruitful in results. Captains Luke Foxe, of Hull, and Thomas James, of Bristol, both sailed independently of each other in 1631. Foxe was above all things a seaman—' so long as I am sailing I bless God and care not,' he laughed when an Arctic storm beat down upon him—but James longed for fame, although he bewailed the hardships its pursuit entailed. And he encountered ' such an infinit abundance of bloud-thirsty Muskitoes, that we were more tormented with them than ever we were with the hot weather ' ; but while many other explorers have borne testimony to the torture caused by those venomous insects, James found material for lament in every privation. Foxe openly laughed at him as ' no seaman,' and told him bluntly, when the two captains met in Hudson Bay, that he would never find the Emperor of Japan in that direction.

But, if James did not succeed in presenting his royal letter of introduction to the Mikado, at least he did good work in exploring the southern part of Hudson Bay. His own name lives in the name of James Bay, and Cape Henrietta Maria—which Foxe had called Ultimum Vale—was called by James after his vessel, which had itself been named in honour of the Queen of England.[1] Foxe on his part sailed northwards to a point about 66° 48′ north latitude, which he named ' Foxe

[1] The strange description of James's adventures is said to be one of the sources which inspired Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The resemblance does not, however, seem to me very striking.

His Farthest,' and then returned home. His name, too, survives in the names of Fox Channel, Fox Basin, and Fox Land.

It was abundantly clear that neither expedition had even approached the discovery of a North-West Passage to the southern or eastern seas; and a feeling of natural depression now succeeded to the earlier hopes of quick success. The civil war at home and the political troubles of the age likewise curbed the spirit of enterprise overseas, and Cromwell, great imperial statesman though he was, turned his energies to the war with Spain in the tropics rather than to the war with Nature in the Arctic. For thirty years there were no more expeditions to the north.

But the long series of voyages had marked out the northern coasts of North America as a sphere of English activity, and those districts were not neglected later, when quieter times returned. Curious names yet lingered on the uncertain charts of the day: the west coast of Hudson Bay was called indifferently New Yorkshire and New Wales, the latter being subsequently divided into New North Wales and New South Wales; there was the quaint island of Brigges His Mathematickes, named by Foxe in memory of a dead friend; and the inlet of Vainely Hoapt Hubbert, so called by Foxe when he turned away in disgust from a minor arm of the bay which a predecessor had believed might furnish a clue to the North-West Passage.

The Hudson's Bay Company, 1670.

Soon after the restoration of the Stuarts to the throne of England, the Hudson's Bay Company entered into nominal possession of Hudson Bay and the surrounding territories. The shareholders were incorporated by royal charter for the purposes of trade and discovery; their trade indeed flourished, but commerce proved more profitable than geography, and the early history of the search for the North-West Passage owes nothing to their operations. A trading corporation with a monopoly seldom favours independent exploration or settlement in its

territories, and the Hudson's Bay Company concentrated its attention on skins and not on science, on dividends and not on discovery. Its work was useful in other ways, but for the first century of its existence it added nothing to geographical knowledge. Its officials appear to have had no belief in the existence of a North-West Passage ; but they had a firm and not ill-founded suspicion that even if such a passage were proved to exist it would be useless, while if, on the other hand, it were of any mercantile value it might conceivably be harmful to their interests.

The Hudson's Bay Company might dislike and delay, but it could not altogether stop, the work of exploration. Practical men no longer, indeed, expected to establish a new route to India by way of the North-West Passage, but the work of discovery is not always undertaken by practical men with practical ends in view. Many who now turned their attention to the problem were attracted by the wish to solve a baffling mystery, by the hope of succeeding where others failed, or by the very real ambition to measure themselves against, and to overcome, the blind obstacles of Nature. Such men were Scoresby, who led an expedition thither in 1817 ; Ross and Parry in the following year and ten years later ; and others whose smaller achievements brought them less fame. Each expedition contributed something to our knowledge of the Arctic ; each paid its toll in human life ; but none succeeded in discovering the expected channel from east to west, and none reached that other goal which had long been associated with the discovery of the North-West Passage—the North Pole.

Yet the dogged persistence which is the keynote of the British character was to win its way in this as in other things. The search which Frobisher and Davis had begun under Elizabeth had since claimed the lives of many heroes, remembered and forgotten, in the long roll of our imperial story ; but the greatest of all was the man who, together with his devoted companions, ' forged with his life the last link of

the North-West Passage,' and perished in the very hour of achievement.

John Franklin was born in the quiet old town of Spilsby in Lincolnshire on 15th April 1786. The ninth child and youngest son in a family of twelve, he was 'not noted, like his brothers and sisters,' records a relative, 'for neatness and orderliness.' But if he did not cultivate that minor virtue, which to youth is often a tiresome superfluity, a crafty burden imposed by elder hands, he possessed even in earlier years the more fruitful gift of ambition. Franklin's boyish wish was to build a ladder 'up to heaven'; his less aspiring parents, doubting the possibility or perhaps the advisability of the stupendous scheme, sent him to school instead. Thus is man bound during life to the narrow compass of his own planet as straitly as he himself pens the farmyard pig to the stye; the majority of both mammals remaining happily oblivious of the limits imposed by higher powers. . . .

Sir John Franklin, 1786-1847.

But one breath of the salt seas—the same waters which inspired Tennyson as they rolled in endless tumult over the long line of Lincolnshire sands—determined young Franklin's career. He must be a sailor; and though his father, who kept a prosperous shop in Spilsby, hated the idea—'I would rather follow my son to the grave,' he said hastily, 'than to the sea'—he at length gave way. In 1801 John Franklin entered the royal navy, after two years' experience of life on a merchantman.

Within three weeks he took part in the terrible battle of Copenhagen; a few months afterwards he accompanied Flinders on a voyage of exploration to Australia, and from that time the main interest of his life lay in geographical discovery. Engaged again in action at Trafalgar on the celebrated *Bellerophon*, wounded before New Orleans at the close of the American War of 1812, he was appointed lieutenant of the *Trent* in the Arctic expedition of 1818.

It was not the fault of Franklin that the explorers returned within six months; his anxiety to serve was proved by the fact that he was shortly afterwards placed in command of an overland expedition. He was instructed to proceed from Hudson Bay to the mouth of the Coppermine River, thence along the north coast to the eastward, until he should meet the naval expedition which Parry was leading westwards towards the same spot from Baffin Bay.

His Overland Expedition, 1819.

Franklin sailed from Gravesend on 23rd May 1819, but months were lost in Canada, owing to the difficulty of obtaining food and the impossibility of exploring that virgin but frozen soil in winter. It was only on 14th June 1821 that the expedition left Fort Enterprise for the northern sea; and on 21st July, after a wearisome march and the navigation of the then practically unknown Coppermine River, Franklin launched his canoe on the still half-frozen Arctic. For a month he travelled eastwards along a sterile, rocky, and inhospitable coast, his followers navigating their frail canoes over a tempestuous, ice-laden sea.

On 18th August it became necessary to return, and Franklin reluctantly ordered the retreat. He had added nearly six hundred miles to the chart of the North American coastline; but there were clear signs that the short Arctic summer was nearly at an end, and, with their depleted resources, there was no possibility of wintering at the spot they had then reached.

The return journey from Point Turnagain lives in the annals of exploration as one of the most desperate fights with famine that man has ever made. When they put back there was only three days' supply of pemmican left. A fortnight later 'we sat down to breakfast,' wrote Franklin in his journal, 'and finished the remainder of our meat.' Henceforth they lived on stray animals, on lichen, on the carcase of a putrid deer, or on scraps of roast leather. The most nauseous food was

eagerly swallowed, so long as it stayed a little while their empty stomachs.

The weather was tempestuous. The tents and bedclothes were frozen. The best canoe was damaged and useless; they were forced to cross the rivers and rapids on their way as best they could, by discovering fords or improvising rafts. The expedition was now compelled to divide into two parties; and when at length the leaders reached their old headquarters at Fort Enterprise on 11th October, a bitter disappointment awaited them. The fort was empty and deserted.

It needed all Franklin's strength of character and all his deep religious faith to keep from despair. In their overwrought state 'the whole party shed tears,' as they thought of their fate and that of their companions behind. The only food obtainable was a disgusting porridge made of rotting deer skins, some decomposed bones discovered on an ash-heap, and a little lichen. Yet even in that terrible crisis Franklin could give 'sincere praises to Almighty God for His past goodness and protection,' and 'humbly confide in His gracious mercy and hope for deliverance.'

A fortnight passed, and no relief came. The rearward party now dragged themselves slowly and painfully into the fort, but death soon reduced their number to four. And those who still remained alive were almost too weak to move. It took one of them nearly half an hour to carry a log of wood twenty yards. They were not strong enough even to inter the dead.

Four weeks the agonies of slow starvation lasted: but at last, on 7th November, help arrived. Four members of the expedition had left the rest on 4th October to seek supplies; and though one died, and the others lived on a pair of old leather trousers, a gun-cover, a pair of old shoes, and some lichen scraped from the rocks, they succeeded in tracking a party of redskins, who gave them provisions.

'Praise be unto the Lord,' wrote Franklin with deep

thankfulness, as he saw that the faith which had not deserted him in his utmost tribulation was now justified. His party of seven—all that survived of a large and well-equipped expedition—recovered their strength, and after a few days' rest, they journeyed southwards, arriving eventually in England in October 1822.

Shortly afterwards Franklin married. But when his young wife sank into a premature grave, stricken down with tuberculosis, he turned again to the exploration of the North. The strength, indeed, of his passion for the Arctic can only be gauged from the fact that, deeply as he seems to have been attached to his wife, he left her bedside for another expedition at a time when her recovery was hopeless. Franklin left England on 16th February 1825; six days later he was a widower. The journey failed to achieve its object.

His Second Expedition, 1825.

A second marriage, a naval command in the Mediterranean, the governorship of Tasmania,[1] and a period of restless inactivity at home, filled the next eighteen years; but all Franklin's thoughts were still set on the Far North. At length the Government determined to equip another expedition to discover the North-West Passage; Franklin applied for, and was appointed to the post of leader; and in May 1845—then a man of fifty-nine, but still inspired with the buoyant hopes of youth—he sailed from England. The *Erebus* and *Terror*, two vessels that had already seen service in Antarctic exploration, carried one hundred and thirty-four men and three years' stores under his command. Franklin's last message to his wife, as he sailed from Stromness on 7th June, was that he was 'entering on his voyage with every requisite, and comforted with every hope of God's merciful guidance and protection.'

His Last Expedition, 1845.

The first weeks of the journey were successful. In a letter

[1] Franklin was not very successful as a governor; but the post was a thankless one at that time. See vol. v.

written from Whalefish Island on 11th July, an officer of the expedition reported that the Eskimos ' believe it to be one of the mildest seasons and earliest summers ever known, and that the ice is clear away from this to Lancaster Sound.' A fortnight later, on 26th July, a whaler spoke the vessels in Melville Bay, and entered in her log that ' both ships' crews are all well, and in remarkable spirits, expecting to finish the operation in good time. They are made fast to a large iceberg, with a temporary observatory fixed upon it. They were in latitude 74° 48′, longitude 66° 13′ W.'

Such was the last news of the expedition for six years ; the ghastly fate which overtook Franklin and his companions was long shrouded from his countrymen by a mystery as impenetrable as the Arctic fogs which enveloped them in the frozen North.

The summer, contrary to expectations, seems to have proved exceptionally short. Winter quarters were made at Beechey Island, on the southern coast of that dismal district which is called North Devon, as if in hollow mockery of the delightful land of streams and moors, of combes and tors, that slopes down ruggedly towards broad-basined Severn, and eternally beats back the too passionate caress with which eastward-surging Atlantic wooes the sailor sons of the west from their mother the earth to their bride the sea.

The next season Franklin pushed forward, discovering the hitherto unknown Peel Sound. He was hopeful of reaching that point at the western entrance to Simpson Strait which he had indicated before leaving England, saying then, ' If I can but get down there, my work is done ; thence it 's plain sailing to the westward.'

He succeeded, indeed, in passing through the Franklin Channel. But while sailing along the western coast of Boothia Felix—no happy land to the crews of the *Erebus* and *Terror*—the ice hemmed them in on 12th September. Its grip was never relaxed ; from that day their fate was sealed.

The seriousness of the position was probably not realised at first. The winter of 1846-7 passed without mishap. On 24th May 1847, a small party started on sleighs for King William's Land. Four days afterwards they reached Point Victory—so named by Sir John Ross years before—and there in a cairn they left the following record :—

'28th of May 1847.—H.M. ships *Erebus* and *Terror* wintered in the ice in lat. 70° 5′ N., long. 98° 23′ W. Having wintered in 1846-7 [1] at Beechey Island in lat. 74° 43′ 28″ N., long. 91° 39′ 15″ W., after having ascended Wellington Channel to lat. 77, and returned by the west side of Cornwallis Island. Sir John Franklin commanding the expedition. All well. Party consisting of 2 officers and 6 men left the ships on Monday, 24th May 1847.

'Gm. Gore, Lieut.

'Chas. F. Des Vœux, Mate.'

After depositing this message, the party appear to have travelled towards Cape Herschel, from which point the last link in the North-West Passage was visible. It is presumed —for here hypothesis can only build on the shifty balance of probabilities and the few relics that were afterwards discovered of the expedition—that the explorers then returned to the ships, and informed their leader that the passage was at last virtually discovered.

Success seemed near; but death, which often mocks success as the frosts of autumn mock the ripening summer fruits, was nearer. On 11th June 1847, a few days after the return of Graham Gore, Sir John Franklin died; happy, it may be hoped, in the knowledge that it had been vouchsafed him to unravel the mystery of the passage; unhappy, perforce, in that he was leaving his men to fight their way out of the ice alone.

The short Arctic summer passed. The vessels drifted southward with the ice, but the ice itself did not break. Another winter came. They were still embedded fast.

The winter likewise passed. Nine officers and twelve men

[1] An obvious error for 1845-6.

died before the spring of 1848 appeared. Many more were sick and weak. Scurvy broke out. Provisions were almost exhausted.[1]

On 22nd April 1848, the crews of the two vessels, one hundred and five men in all, packed their remaining provisions on the sledges and made a desperate dash for the south. Had they stayed their departure until the summer all would have starved. Fifteen miles from the ships they found their burden too great; the sledges were lightened. Some years afterwards a search expedition found the place strewn with the articles that had been cast away, 'clothing in a huge heap four feet high, four heavy sets of boat's cooking stoves, pick-axes, shovels, iron hoops, old canvas, about four feet of a copper lightning conductor, long pieces of hollow brass curtain-rods, a small case of selected medicines, and even a small sextant.'

Again they started. From time to time on that weary march one of the number dropped down and died. At length the party found it necessary to separate; the weaker endeavoured to return to the ships, the stronger pushed forward.

On the way they discovered the cairn in which Graham Gore had left his message of 'all well' the previous year. To it was now added in a different hand—Gore was already dead—the last authentic record of the expedition. It ran :—

'April 25th, 1848.—H.M. ships *Terror* and *Erebus* were deserted on the 22nd April, 5 leagues N.N.W. of this, having been beset since 12th September 1846. The officers and crews, con-

[1] There should have been plenty of provisions; but a rascally trader named Goldner provided the expedition with rotten tinned meat, which was left behind at Beechey Island. Had it not been for this scoundrel's treachery, the survivors could have remained on the ships until August, and then have lived on the game which abounds in the extreme north during that month while they marched to the south. As it was, they had to abandon the vessels in April, when there is no game. They had to choose between certain starvation on the ships and probable starvation on land. The price of Goldner's miserable extra profit was the lives of a hundred brave men—and his own soul, if he possessed one.

sisting of 105 souls, under the command of Captain F. R. M. Crozier, landed here in lat. 69° 37′ 42″ N., long. 98° 41′ W. Sir John Franklin died on the 11th June 1847, and the total loss by deaths in the expedition has been to this date 9 officers and 15 men.

'(Signed) F. R. M. Crozier,
Captain and Senior Officer.
'(Signed) James Fitzjames,
Captain, H.M.S. *Erebus*.

'and start to-morrow, 26th, for Back's Fish River.

'This paper was found by Lt. Irving under the cairn supposed to have been built by Sir James Ross in 1831, 4 miles to the northward, where it had been deposited by the late Commander Gore in June 1847.[1] Sir James Ross's pillar has not, however, been found, and the paper has been transferred to this position, which is that in which Sir James Ross's pillar was erected.'

The rest is conjecture, founded on the uncertain traditions of the Eskimos, and confirmed, in so far as it can be confirmed, by the skeletons of the dead. Some years later the Eskimos told an inquirer of a ship 'crushed by the ice off the north shore of King William Island, but all her people landed safely, and went away to the Great Fish River, where they died.' A second ship 'had been seen off King William Island,' and 'drifted on shore at the fall of the same year.' A boat mounted on a sledge was discovered by McClintock in 1859, and in the boat, besides 'a vast quantity of tattered clothing,' there was 'that which transfixed us with awe'—the remains of two human beings, partly eaten by animals.

As for the second and stronger party that pushed on to the south, the Eskimos stated that the graves of two white men were found in the vicinity of the Pfeiffer River, and that there was another white man's grave on a long low point jutting out into the sea some five or six miles to the eastward. The remains of five white men were also discovered on a small island called Todd Islet, about two or three miles off the point. In a bay to the west of Port Richardson, subsequently named

[1] Error for May 1847.

Starvation Cove, a boat covered with an awning, and containing the remains of thirty or thirty-five men, was found. It was also reported that a tent had been seen in the vicinity of Terror Bay, the floor of which was completely covered with the bodies of white men.

A party of about forty white men was observed during the spring of 1848 dragging sledges and a boat southwards. They were emaciated and appeared in want of food, and they 'fell down,' said an old Eskimo woman simply, 'and died as they walked along.'

Such was the pitiful end of Franklin's last expedition in search of the North-West Passage. Not one man survived. But it is a terrible irony of the fate which mocks the helplessness of poor human beings, that the so-called Hunger Bay, where so many skeletons were found, is in summer one of the most beautiful regions along the whole northern coast of North America. 'Probably there is not another place in the world so abandoned and bare in winter,' wrote Amundsen fifty years later, but 'there, where summer comes and millions of flowers brighten the fields; there, where all the waters gleam and all the ponds sing and bubble during the short freedom from the yoke of ice; there, where the birds swarm and brood with a thousand glad notes and the first buck stretches his head over the ice harbour, there a heap of bleached skeletons marks the spot where the remains of Franklin's brave crew drew their last breath in the last act of that sad tragedy.'

When two years had elapsed since the expedition left England, and no news of Franklin reached home, inquiries were made, and provisions were sent to the most northerly point inhabited by whites on the American mainland. Rewards were offered for any information of the missing vessels, and in the following year three relief expeditions were fitted out. Nothing, however, was discovered.

Further inquiries were made, and thirteen search parties

were sent forth, one after another, from Britain and the United States. The interest of the whole civilised world was aroused, and its sympathy was silently and respectfully given to the heroic widow of the explorer, who fitted out several expeditions at her own cost and charges. With the sublime faith of woman, she refused to believe in the fact of her widowhood, and letter after letter from her hand accompanied each expedition to the husband who was already dead.

Slowly the dark cloud of mystery was dispersed, and the tragic story was pieced together. But neither of the ships were ever found ; the body of Franklin was never discovered. To this day the great explorer rests with his comrades in the silent spaces of the unknown—a victim of the secret which he had dragged from the cruel white bosom of the Arctic north.

The North-West Passage was discovered, but its actual transit was not accomplished for half a century longer, and then not by a British vessel.[1] Yet it was, perhaps, fitting that a Scandinavian, a descendant of that race of vikings which had first ventured on the wide waste waters of the North, should achieve the honour of sailing through the channel that had baffled so many generations.

From the days of early youth Roald Amundsen dreamed of completing Franklin's work. He was fired by the exploits of his countrymen, Nordenskjöld, who had discovered the North-East Passage, and Nansen, whose polar expedition he had wished to accompany ; but financial difficulties barred the way. At length,

The Passage Navigated, 1905.

[1] In 1850-2 McClure and Collinson sailed through the greater part of one of the passages, and, being forced to abandon the ships, walked the rest of the way from the Bay of Mercy to Beechey Island on the solid ice. For this splendid voyage in the *Enterprise* and the *Investigator* the leaders and crews received half the reward of £20,000 offered by parliament for the discovery of the North-West Passage. But the channel through which they passed is never navigable for all its length ; the only navigable channel was discovered by McClintock in searching for Franklin, and it was this channel which Amundsen was the first to sail through in 1905.

however, funds were collected, and on 16th June 1903 Amundsen sailed from Christiania on the little vessel *Gjöa*, originally a Hardanger herring-boat.

The northern coast of North America was reached without incident. Passing the graves of some of the Franklin expedition on Beechey Island, on whose sombre shores, wrote Amundsen, 'hung the heaviness and sadness of death, neither life nor vegetation nor scarcely any water,' the *Gjöa* herself was in peril as she ran aground.

She escaped, however, without suffering serious damage, and two winters were passed among the Eskimos at the magnetic North Pole, where many scientific observations of great value were made. 'Though the coast,' wrote Hansen, vice-commander of the expedition, 'was stern, stormy, foggy, and ice-bound both in summer and winter, though the land we wrested from the realm of darkness was barren and stony, shorn of natural beauty, useless to mankind, yet it seemed to me that the infinite wastes gave birth to conceptions of greatness, beauty and goodness. . . . Some impressions, at least, of the stupendous, were conveyed to me in those pathless regions, where God's sun or the bright stars alone point the way. The thoughts that to me were overwhelming are such as find expression in the soul rather than on the lips.' The limited language of man may well fail in the contemplation of the infinite.

In the summer of 1905 the *Gjöa* proceeded through the ice-floes and narrow shallows of the Victoria Strait without mishap; slow and difficult but continuous westerly progress was made; and when on 17th August Amundsen cast anchor on the further side of Cape Colburne, the navigation of the North-West Passage was at last achieved. Ten days later American whalers from the Pacific were spoken.

The long northern winter again closed in on the expedition when Herschel Island was reached, but Amundsen's purpose was already accomplished. The following year he rounded

the Alaskan coast, arrived at Nome City on 31st August 1906, and thence proceeded on his way to San Francisco and Europe.

Thus was the faith of John Davis and Humphrey Gilbert, and their fellow-seamen of the Elizabethan age, vindicated three centuries after their deaths. The North-West Passage existed, and it was navigable.

But our souls pursue shadows even while our bodies perish. So far as the practical purpose of finding a new and safe road to India was concerned, for which alone the older navigators had sought the passage, it had long proved useless. Its final discovery was of geographical interest; it was not a political or commercial fact.

CHAPTER II

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY: 1668-1784[1]

The later adventurers who spent their lives in the search for the North-West Passage sought glory rather than gold; the more solid prospects of material profit attracted a different but not less useful, and at times not less heroic class of men to the discovery of the north-western territories of the American continent.

The first English pioneers who entered the Hudson Bay had failed in their attempt to trade with the natives; and their successors in those waters appear to have given small attention to commercial matters. Other nations were less disinterested in the work of exploration; and some few years after the city of Quebec was founded, it became the centre of a lucrative French trade in the furs and skins of the wild

[1] Authorities.—George Bryce and Beckles Willson have written histories of the Company; both should be consulted, as also the *History of the Fur Trade*, by Sir A. Mackenzie. Charlevoix and the other writers on New France are occasionally useful. Radisson has left an amusing but absolutely untrustworthy account of his exploits.

animals that roamed the vast prairies of the interior. The English now looked on disconsolately while their rivals prospered: some furs were, indeed, bought from the redskins by the New Englanders and shipped to Europe through Boston merchants, but the great bulk of the traffic remained in French hands.

England and the Fur Trade.

The origin of the regular English connection with the American fur trade was peculiar, since it was not due to any initiative on the part of English commercial men, but solely to the discontent of a pair of French rogues at the reluctant attitude of their own compatriots at Quebec towards their projects for extending that traffic. A year or two after Charles II. had returned in triumph to London, these two men, Radisson and Groseillers by name, made their appearance in the colony of Massachusetts. They were poor but daring; their tongues were as plausible as their schemes and promises were attractive: and in Boston they were well received. But the people of Puritan America, albeit keen to extend their business connections and possessed withal of a sharp eye for profitable enterprises, had not sufficient floating capital at their command for so great a matter as the invasion of a foreign market; and the two Frenchmen, disappointed for the moment, but still hopeful of eventual success, proceeded to London in 1667, after a further rebuff from their own countrymen in Paris.

Their hour of good fortune had arrived. Prince Rupert welcomed Radisson and Groseillers in England; the king granted them an audience: and money, the supreme test of faith on such occasions, was readily forthcoming.

Fort Charles, 1668.

A trading voyage to the Hudson Bay was determined on; the expedition was financed: and on 3rd June 1668, the *Eaglet* and *Nonsuch* ketches sailed down the Thames from Wapping with Groseillers on board. The *Eaglet* was forced to return; the *Nonsuch* held on its way. On 4th August the entrance to Hudson Bay was sighted;

anchor was cast on 29th September at the mouth of a river which was named by the voyagers after their patron Rupert. Summer was already over ; and to protect themselves against certain cold and possible enemies, Fort Charles [1] was built. The rough wooden hut, which was thus dignified by the name of the reigning monarch of England, was the first actual settlement of the English people in the modern Dominion of Canada ; it is a curious incongruity that it should have been erected by a renegade Frenchman from the rival colony of New France.

But neither Groseillers nor his associates cared greatly for such incongruities ; they had much more pressing anxieties in providing against frost and famine. The winter proved long and dreary, ' Nature looking like a carcase frozen to death ' : but when the snow thawed with the advent of spring, the natives appeared and eagerly bartered their furs. In the following June part of the expedition returned with their purchases to London ; the remainder stayed quietly in the establishment at Fort Charles.

This first voyage proved so profitable that there was little difficulty in putting the traffic on a firmer and, for the two French adventurers, a more satisfactory basis. The Hudson's Bay Company was now formed ; and its charter, granted on 2nd May 1670, stated that the corporation was established ' for a discovery of a new passage into the South Sea, and for the finding of some trade for furs, minerals, and other considerable commodities.' The Company was entitled to the ' whole trade of all those seas, streaghts, and bays, rivers, lakes, creeks, and sounds, in whatsoever latitude . . . within the entrance of the streights commonly called Hudson's streights, together with all the lands, countries, and territories upon the coasts and confines.' It was made sole and absolute proprietor, possessing the power of making laws and war : and these enormous privileges

The Hudson's Bay Company, 1670.

[1] Now known as Rupert House.

were granted on the nominal condition of a payment to the King of England of 'two elks and two black beavers, whensoever and so often as we, our heirs and our successors, shall happen to enter into the said countries, territories, and regions.'

The stockholders in the Company were fortunate in having at their head men of high political influence, such as Prince Rupert, the Duke of York (afterwards James II.), and John Churchill (afterwards Duke of Marlborough), as well as merchants whose names carried weight in commercial circles; in later years the business became concentrated in the hands of a few staid city men, whom Bolingbroke ridiculed as 'smug ancient gentlemen.' Meetings were held in London once a week, at the Tower, the Mint, or Rupert's house in Spring Gardens; subsequently offices were taken in Broad Street, in the building known as Old South Sea House; eventually the corporation settled in the heart of the City of London, at the corner of Lime and Leadenhall Streets, in the unassuming premises from which operations are directed to this day.

Its Great Prosperity.

The trade grew gradually in value, and the Company prospered greatly. The original capital was but £10,500; yet in 1684 a dividend of fifty per cent. was paid, and again in 1688; in 1690, after an intermediate dividend of twenty-five per cent., the stock was trebled and a dividend equal to seventy-five per cent. on its original value was declared. In later years dividends of forty per cent. were not unusual, and in 1720 the stock was again trebled. Once, indeed, the directors were tempted by the example of the South Sea Company, to inflate their capital and to unload it on the general public: but the bursting of the South Sea Bubble fortunately came in time to save the Hudson's Bay Company from that disaster. For many years afterwards its affairs were soberly but capably administered by a governor, a deputy-governor, and a managing committee of seven.

The Company's methods of business were simple. Its ships left London every year in June, and returned from Hudson Bay each October laden with furs, which had been purchased from the natives for guns, powder, hatchets, knives, beads, cloths, tobacco, kettles, and similar articles. At first the values of the goods exchanged with the tribes for their furs was a matter of tedious haggling and barter, and prices fluctuated considerably; after a time, however, systematic and regular dealings introduced something like a standard rate. In 1718, for instance, a blanket fetched six or seven beaver skins, and a gun fifteen; sixty years later, in 1775, a gun bought twenty beaver skins, a strand blanket ten, a white blanket eight, an axe three, half a pound of gunpowder one, and ten balls one. Tobacco was worth one beaver skin per foot of 'Spencer's Twist,' and diluted rum, two beaver skins the bottle. Two beavers could be bought for a looking-glass and comb, or for a pound of beads. In 1676, the Company bought nearly £19,000 worth of skins for £650 worth of English goods; in 1748, they exported goods to the value of £5012, 12s. 3d., and imported furs sold for £30,160, 5s. 11d.: and in the ten years preceding 1749 they exported in all goods valued at £40,240 in England, buying therewith furs which were sold for £122,835. The chief furs imported were those of the beaver, sable, moose, marten, bear, and otter.

The furs were sold by auction in London, and, if possible, only when the market demand was favourable to high prices. As the business of the corporation extended, however, the European headquarters of the fur trade, which had been in Leipzig, gravitated towards England; and the goods of the Hudson's Bay Company were exported to the Continent, where they often fetched better prices than at home.

But the course of the Company's affairs was not one of unchecked prosperity. It was troubled by foreign competition, by international disputes, and by the jealousy of English

fellow-traders; and one of its main difficulties sprang from parsimony to its own employees. The Company, indeed, was notorious for the low wages it paid, which caused disaffection among the officers of the fleet, and on one occasion, at least, provoked a seaman's riot on the Thames. For the stations or forts in America young English apprentices or raw youths from the Orkneys were engaged; and besides their board and lodging, these received but £8 the first year, £10 the second, £12 the third, and £14 subsequently. This was but scanty remuneration for a tedious life in an uncivilised land, cooped up in an isolated settlement, and faced with a rigorous climate: and the natural result was that the servants of the Company were unenterprising and often of an inferior character.

Opposition and Enmity.

The juniors, indeed, had no remedy save to leave the service, for strict discipline was kept at the stations, and floggings were not unknown; the governors, who were necessarily allowed a freer hand, discovered certain compensations in their lot. They alleviated their loneliness by taking to themselves native mistresses, to the scandal of the tribes, who saw a minor population of half-breeds playing around every British fort; and they supplemented their salaries by indulging in illicit trade, and sharing the profits with the captains of the Company's fleet.

The Company only concerned itself with the latter aspect of their servants' misconduct. The irregular marital relations of its employees reduced no dividends and infringed no monopoly; illicit trade did both. Energetic steps were at once taken to repress the practice, and if the offenders were discovered they were dismissed. But since private dealings of this character undoubtedly continued, the risk was probably small and well worth the reward. Even in 1769, when salaries were raised, the chief factors in America only received £130 a year, and a gratuity of three shillings upon every score of made beaver.

When a corporation is so sparing of its wages, its servants are seldom over zealous in their work. But commercial rivals are not bound thus to regulate their exertions ; and the Hudson's Bay Company soon found it had opponents at home. In 1698 Parliament was petitioned by the Skinners' and Felt-makers' Company not to renew the monopoly, owing to the high price charged for beaver ; but the Hudson's Bay Company protested that ' it was well known that the price had decreased one-third since its own establishment ; and that themselves, far from hindering the trade, encouraged it by every means in their power, being anxious to be relieved of an overstocked commodity.'

There was probably some truth on both sides. While the directors of the Hudson's Bay Company naturally wished to encourage trade, it was an integral part of their policy not to lower the price of their goods by flooding the market ; and although the skin of the beaver was no doubt cheaper than in the days before the Company was formed, the purchasers considered that fact no reason why it should not be cheaper still. In any case, the petition passed unnoticed, and the charter was renewed.

But in general the Company lost little by opposition at home : it suffered far less in this respect, indeed, than the older and more celebrated East India Company, against whom a war of pamphlets was constantly maintained. The real struggles of the Hudson's Bay Company were with the French, and later with the Scottish traders in America itself.

Rivalry with the French Fur-Traders.

The whole of the territory granted to the Company by England was likewise claimed by France : in actual fact it belonged to neither country. English mariners had explored part of the coasts ; French adventurers and traders had explored part of the interior, although it is more than doubtful whether they had ever reached the Hudson Bay itself. But neither had colonised ; and for two centuries there was no

attempt at colonisation, since the French in the North-West desired nothing less than to see the fur trade interfered with by outsiders of their own or any nation; and the English Hudson's Bay Company agreed with their rivals in this if in nothing else.

The English had only been trading a few years in the North-West, however, when the French became alarmed at the inroads upon their traffic with the natives. Though the Hudson's Bay Company gave low prices for the furs they bought from the tribes, it was said that they paid more than the French; and it is certain that they were more successful in their dealings. The French merchants, moreover, had a long journey overland from their outposts in the West before they could ship their goods to France, and in consequence, they could only trade in the lighter and smaller skins; the English, who purchased their goods on the very shores of Hudson Bay, had no such difficulties of transport, and were able to buy both light and heavy furs.

But these disadvantages, serious as they were, did not deter the French from active opposition to those whom they considered invaders of their rights. In 1678 the French minister, Colbert, sent word to the intendant of Canada that he was to dispute the right of the English in the North-West; and a brilliant expedition under D'Iberville quickly compelled the not very militant governors of the English forts on the Hudson Bay to surrender. The fickle Radisson, who had already deserted the Hudson's Bay Company and rejoined his countrymen, attacked the English stations: for some years a state of war now prevailed. Rival forts were taken and retaken; the vessels of the Hudson's Bay Company and the French Fur Company fought on the high seas: and profits on both sides fell to vanishing point. In 1687 the English Company claimed £211,255, 16s. 3d. damages against the French Government, and preferred other claims in after years; but not a penny was ever paid in compensation.

Peace was not restored between the rival traders until the year 1713. By the Treaty of Utrecht, which was concluded at that time, it was agreed that the entire west coast of the Hudson Bay should be recognised as British; while the French were to evacuate all their posts in those parts and to surrender all the war material within six months. A commission was also appointed to determine the boundary line between the English territories on the bay and the French dominions in Canada.

With the advent of peace, prosperity and welcome dividends again smiled upon the shareholders in the English corporation. Competition with the French traders still remained keen, but it was a competition in which the English easily held their own; the real crisis in the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company came when the fall of the French power in America opened the whole North-West to the independent and far more active English, Scottish, and New England traders. The old Company had, indeed, been granted a monopoly by the Crown, and its officials were empowered 'to seize upon the persons of all such English or any other subjects which sail into the Hudson Bay or inhabit in any of the countries, islands, or territories granted to the said governor and company, without their leave or license.' But the extent of the north-western territories was vast; and the officials of the Hudson's Bay Company were few and not always too zealous in the service of their none too generous masters. Their newer competitors, like their late French rivals, traded in the interior of the country, while the Hudson's Bay Company had never left the shores of the bay from which it took its title. And the Company, moreover, was fully conscious of a weak joint in its armour should the directors ever attempt to press their chartered rights too hardly upon their competitors.

The Independent British Traders.

The original charter of the Company had stipulated that they should endeavour to discover 'a new passage into the

South Sea'; and they had neither found that passage, nor made any serious attempt to do so. They had, indeed, little inducement to explore the unknown West, for the natives brought all the furs that the Company could buy down to their stations on the Hudson Bay. And the three expeditions that the Company had sent out, in 1719, in 1721, and again in 1722, had all been unfortunate. Three vessels out of five had been lost; the other two discovered nothing worthy of note.

They were correct, indeed, in their surmise that there was no outlet to any southern or western ocean from the Hudson Bay; but a by no means false impression had gained ground that the Company wished to retard the progress of all discovery in the North-West; and a long agitation by a London merchant named Dobbs had deepened that impression into a conviction.

A reward of £20,000 had been offered by Parliament for the discovery of the North-West Passage; but the Company showed no inclination to compete for the prize. It sent out no expeditions to explore the interior until its hands were forced by more energetic rivals; in the year 1770, indeed, it possessed only one establishment inland—at Henley House, a hundred miles up-river from Fort Albany—and it had evidently no intention of extending its connection while it continued to draw satisfactory profits from the trade on the bay.

It would be ridiculous to blame the directors of the Hudson's Bay Company for their policy of inaction. It was their purpose to pay good dividends to their shareholders, and they paid them. They had a shrewd notion that exploration would diminish rather than increase their profits, and they refrained from pursuing those paths of adventure which others found too tempting to resist. In later years, when competition forced the directors and servants of the Company to bolder courses, none of their rivals proved more able or energetic

than they; but their earlier work belongs to the annals of commerce, not of empire.

The adventurers who sought the North-West Passage discovered the Hudson Bay, and thereby contributed indirectly to the inauguration of British enterprise in Canada. The Hudson's Bay Company, which took advantage of the work of the explorers and of dissensions among the French fur-traders, founded the first English stations in the north-western territories of the continent, and thereby established British interests on a more solid footing. But it, too, did no more than point the way. The true pioneers of north-western Canada followed the southern and overland route to the West.

CHAPTER III

OVERLAND TO THE WEST: 1578-1860[1]

Among the writings of Cullen Bryant, the deepest if the most sombre of nineteenth-century American poets, are some verses which depict a future for the western prairies of the continent in which 'the hum of herds' should 'blend with

[1] Authorities.—H. H. Bancroft's *History of the Pacific States of North America* is a monumental work which deals exhaustively with many aspects of the subject. Begg's *History of the North-West* is useful; for the difficulties underlying the subject, a pamphlet dated 1889 on the *Early North-West*, by W. F. Poole. Burpee's *Search for the Western Sea*, Bryce's *Hudson's Bay Company* and Willson's *Great Company* as before.

The first English exploration of the Far West is described in Hakluyt, the publications of the Hakluyt Society, and in Purchas. Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, is valuable; also La Vérendrye's *Journals and Letters*, original documents of the utmost importance, which are published in the Canadian Archives Report. Other first-hand narratives of a similar kind are Samuel Hearne's *Journey* (1795); Sir Alexander Mackenzie's *Voyages from Montreal* (1795-1801); Sir George Back's *Journal of the Arctic Land Expedition* (1836); and Simpson's *Narrative of Discoveries* (1843). A description of early British Columbia is given in the sketch of Bishop Sheepshanks (of Norwich) entitled *A Bishop in the Rough* (1909). A popular sketch of Lord Selkirk's settlement at Winnipeg has been written by Dr. George Bryce.

the rustling of the heavy grain,' and mingle ' with the laugh of children, the soft voice of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn of Sabbath worshippers.' The vision was prophetic ; for the remoter territories of the United States were little more than wilderness when Bryant wrote, and the great North-West of Canada was uninhabited by white men and still almost unknown.

The three thousand miles of land which stretched unbroken from Atlantic to Pacific furnished an opportunity of daring and renown whose splendour was not lost upon the brave ; but the solitude of the vast wastes, the savage brutality of the redskins, and the fury of the wild beasts which dogged their way, were sufficient terror to deter the timid from adventuring beyond the narrow limits of the older settlements. The one practicable route between the eastern and western coasts of North America was the long sea voyage round Cape Horn : and even so late as the year 1817 the Governor of Quebec reported that it was impossible to communicate with the mouth of the Columbia River overland before a sloop which had sailed thither from the United States, and which was detained off Peru, could reach the same destination.[1] In the latter case the journey might take six months, but it was fairly certain of completion ; in the former, no limit could be assigned as to time, and its ultimate success was more than doubtful.

A band of daring Spanish travellers had crossed the Andes and penetrated South America from west to east in the sixteenth century. The northern continent proved more formidable, and explorers there had spent their energies in other quests. But the search for the North Pole, a search which at least in its earlier stages was an outcome of the supreme desire to reach India, had proved elusive. The search for a navigable North-West Passage had failed, as that for a

[1] From Mrs. Bagot's *Journal*, quoted in *George Canning and His Friends*, by Josceline Bagot (1909).

North-East Passage had also done; and adventurers slowly came to realise that the path to the Far West of America and to the western ocean must be sought overland.

Yet the first English knowledge of the West had been obtained by sea. On 5th June 1578, Francis Drake had reached the forty-third degree of north latitude on the Pacific coast in the course of his voyage round the world; but at this point, says the chronicler of the expedition, 'we found the air so cold, that our men being pinched with the same, complained of the extremity thereof; and the further we went, the more the cold increased upon us, whereupon we thought it best for that time to seek land, and did so, finding it not mountainous, but low plain land; and we drew back again without landing, till we came within thirty-eight degrees towards the line. In which height it pleased God to send us into a fair and good bay, with a good wind to enter the same. In this bay we anchored the seventeenth of June.'

Francis Drake in California, 1578.

The natives proved friendly, and the country rich—'there was no part of earth here to be taken up wherein was not some special likelihood of gold or silver'—but in spite of its wealth, it seemed 'that the Spaniards hitherto had never been in this part, neither did ever discover the land by many degrees to the southwards.' The district was therefore claimed for England, a plate recording the fact, and the title of Elizabeth to the same being set up, 'together with a piece of six pence of current English money'; the whole country was named Nova Albion, 'and that for two causes, the one in respect of the white banks and cliffs which lie towards the sea, the other because it might have some affinity with our country in name, which sometime was so called.'

Such was the first claim put forward by England to a territory which was to be coveted in turn by Spain and Russia before it passed finally to the great English Republic in 1848. But although Drake's visit had uncurtained a single scene

in the Far West, nothing more was done to make good the claim of Britain to Nova Albion. The allusion to precious metals attracted little attention, for every voyager who returned home from the outer world brought with him wondrous stories of gold and jewels; and no other English vessel appeared off California until Captain James Cook landed there exactly two centuries later—in 1778.

New England on the Atlantic had, meanwhile, grown strong and populous; Nova Albion on the Pacific had been forgotten and neglected. And Cherikov, the Russian, and Bering, the Dane, had made their way into the western ocean in 1741; Spain had established mission stations under the Viceroy of New Mexico at San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other places along the coast; the French were, too, exploring the interior of the continent. Only the British seemed to lag behind in the work of discovery; and in the earliest records of the overland route to the Far West of America they can hardly claim to share.

Champlain on the Ottawa, 1613.

The British, indeed, were still occupied in searching Hudson Bay and James Bay for the waterway which should lead due west to the East, while the French were already pressing westwards overland. Cartier's discovery of the St. Lawrence in 1535 pointed the road two generations later to Samuel Champlain, the greatest of all Frenchmen in the new world; and that statesman-adventurer, after establishing a French colony securely in Nova Scotia in 1605, and founding the city of Quebec on the great river three years afterwards, tracked through the dense forest which then lay to the north of New England, crossed the St. Lawrence, and made his way along the Ottawa River and onwards as far as Georgian Bay.

The first step in the true path to the Canadian West was now discovered. The transcontinental line of the Canadian Pacific Railway of to-day follows closely the route held by Champlain in 1613; and every traveller who passes over

those metals between Montreal and Lake Nipissing towards the great lakes and the greater prairies beyond is himself an unconscious imitator of the first of the many pioneers in the interior of Canada.

Within a few years after Champlain's expedition, the Ottawa River had become the highway of an important trade in furs between the merchants of Quebec and the redskin tribes of the West. From that traffic the French on the St. Lawrence derived such wealth as they possessed; and it was directly due to the hope of securing a share in the profits of the trade that the English Hudson's Bay Company was formed in 1670.

The Fur-Traders and Missionaries.

A rival venture, which tended to raise prices and divert supplies, was naturally hated and opposed by the older dealers. The two nations followed entirely different methods of trading; yet whatever their relative commercial success, it must be admitted that in other respects the French maintained an easy lead. The English Company discouraged the exploration and settlement of the territories under its control, and its servants waited in the forts on the Hudson Bay for the redskins to bring their furs to barter; the French, on the contrary, were not content to remain quietly at Quebec or Montreal, but visited the tribes themselves and often made their purchases on the spot.

The inevitable consequence was that, while the English knew practically nothing of the interior of Canada after trading for half a century upon its borders, the French adventurers had pushed further and further westwards almost every year. It was indeed a curious medley of motives which drew men thus to explore the primeval forest and prairies. Those who tired of the monotony and poverty of life in Quebec often took to the woods; and these *coureurs de bois*, as they were called, sometimes adopted redskin customs, married redskin wives, and spent the remainder of their years with the tribes. Others made a scandalous but easy livelihood

by selling poisonous alcoholic liquors to the natives, who eagerly swallowed the vile compound which kept them intoxicated for days at a time; against this traffic the missionaries, who soon followed the traders into the interior, protested in vain.

With most of the explorers, it is true, the sole object of their expeditions was the hope of finding fresh sources of the fur trade; but some were animated by more disinterested motives, seeking the discovery of the western sea or the expansion of New France; others, again, were missionaries who endeavoured in all sincerity to convert the natives to Christianity.

There is no nobler chapter in the history of the French Empire in America than the self-sacrificing enthusiasm with which the evangelists of the Catholic Church pursued their hazardous task [1]; but whatever their various errands in the West might be, all were alike instrumental in extending the knowledge and the power of their nation in the remoter districts of Canada. In this respect the rascally trader, who set out from Quebec with a sleigh piled high with rum, and who returned with a cargo of furs and skins, differed not from the ascetic priest whose sole equipment for the wilderness was but a cross and a promise of eternal salvation to every savage who should embrace the faith of Christ. Both returned—if they ever returned from a journey which often ended in starvation or death by torture—with the news of fresh rivers seen, of fresh tribes discovered; both were equally active in expanding the empire of the Bourbons over the unknown West.

Trading or mission stations now began to appear in the various spots which proved convenient meeting-places for white and redskin; and since experience had already furnished ample evidence that the character of the aborigines

[1] See vol. i. bk. v. ch. iii. for some details of the French missionaries in Canada.

was extremely treacherous and uncertain, these stations were generally fortified. Their position was often admirably chosen; and it is but rarely, even under the very different conditions of modern mechanical locomotion, that the site has been abandoned on which the first rude huts of the fur-traders or evangelists were erected. The French stations possessed, in fact, and were meant to possess, a strategic as well as a commercial and religious value. Such was the origin of the establishment at Fort Niagara, which dates from 1679; of Sault Sainte Marie, a station founded a few years later, which controlled the heads of the three lakes of Superior, Michigan, and Huron; of Detroit, which commands the channel between Huron and Erie; and of several others of less fame and importance.

In the course of these dealings with the redskins the French adventurers received intelligence of a mighty river that flowed in a district still further west than any territories which they had yet explored. The news was of profound interest to men who had never abandoned the hope of discovering the western ocean; and in 1678 the brave La Salle set out to explore the Mississippi. But the stream led south to the Gulf of Mexico, and not westwards to the Pacific; and although the expedition resulted in the establishment of a new French colony in Louisiana, and incidentally gave rise to the project of hemming in the English settlements on the Atlantic behind an impregnable chain of French forts, it added little to the knowledge which had been collected concerning the West.[1]

La Salle and the Mississippi, 1678-82.

La Salle lost his life through the treachery of one of his followers when attempting to find his way back to Canada up the Mississippi in 1682; but many other travellers were ready to take up the work of exploration when an untimely death forced him to abandon his project. The way, however,

[1] For a description of La Salle's journey and the foundation of Louisiana, see vol. i. bk. iv. ch. iv., and bk. v. ch. iii.

was still far from clear, and the pioneers were often misled through their misunderstanding of the information given by the redskins; while the information which was thus volunteered was generally far from accurate and frequently altogether devoid of truth.

Rumours were circulated of the existence of strong cities with stone walls, of fortified towns where bearded white men had been seen to ride on horseback, of a great sea on which were ships that fired heavy guns; and the eager credulity of the explorers easily accepted all such statements as a revelation of the overland route to the West. A more trustworthy account was given of a lake which was said to be studded with numerous islands, its shores covered with trees, and its waters to empty themselves in a river which flowed into the western sea. The description clearly pointed to the Lake of the Woods, which communicates with Lake Winnipeg directly by the Winnipeg River. But Lake Winnipeg was not the western sea which the French pioneers sought, albeit the information seems to have been given in all good faith, and that lake was doubtless the limit of the knowledge possessed by the native guides who gave it.

If the credulity of the explorers often misled them, their active faith in their mission upheld them amid a thousand disappointments; and although the ocean which they sought lay immeasurably further to the west than they had ever dreamed, each generation of pioneers advanced a stage nearer towards the unknown Rocky Mountains and the waters of the Pacific. Their advance would have been more speedy had the funds which they required to carry on the work been forthcoming from France or from Quebec. But while the royal court at Paris was willing enough to approve, it was never ready to contribute towards the expenses, of an expedition; and the fur-traders of Eastern Canada were interested in nothing beyond the immediate profits of their business, which many did not expect to be materially enlarged by the

exploration of the country beyond Lake Superior. In this respect, at least, a close parallel might be drawn between the directors of the French and English trading companies.

But the discovery of the great north-west of Canada loses nothing of its interest from the fact that its author sought no personal advantage from his work. Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye, the first native French Canadian to achieve lasting renown, had been born in the year 1685, at the little settlement of Three Rivers in the province of Quebec. The son of the governor of the place, he had already seen service in New England and Newfoundland at an age when most European boys of his social rank were still in the schoolroom; and a few years later, on visiting the old world and joining a regiment of French Grenadiers as an ensign, the young officer found and seized the occasion of distinguishing himself during the campaigns in Flanders. At the bloody battle of Malplaquet in 1709, he was left for dead upon the field; but an excellent constitution enabled him to recover from the nine wounds which he received, and his services won him the rank of lieutenant.

La Vérendrye discovers the North-West, 1731.

A proud career in the service of the greatest military power of the age now opened before the young Canadian; but adverse circumstances seemingly compelled his renunciation of the French army and a probably unwelcome return to Quebec. For some years it appeared likely that La Vérendrye's ambition to distinguish himself would be thwarted. A commission in a colonial regiment offered little chance of glory; still less was there room for fame in the command of a remote trading station at Nipigon, north of Lake Superior, the post to which La Vérendrye was appointed in 1726.

Two years passed quietly in the useful but hardly inspiring business of bartering furs. La Vérendrye was now forty-three, an age at which men often begin to abandon the dreams of youth in favour of more solid comforts: but the imagina-

tion of the Canadian had already been fired by the unsolved mystery of the West; and when a redskin named Ochagach reported to him the existence of a great occidental sea, he determined to organise an expedition of discovery.

Stripped of the extraordinary features with which the prodigal imagination of the native or the misunderstanding of the white man surrounded the report, it was nothing more than the old account of Lake Winnipeg which had misled so many earlier pioneers. This, however, La Vérendrye could not know; and he at once sought permission and assistance from the authorities for his journey. Louis xv. returned a negative answer to an appeal which was backed by the Governor of Canada: the royal treasury, which was regularly drawn upon for less worthy objects, had no funds to lavish on exploration. But a monopoly of the fur trade in the country which he was about to enter was at length assigned to the commandant at Nipigon; and the merchants of Montreal, who were not unmoved by the prospect of future profits, equipped him with supplies and provisions.

The summer of 1731 saw the expedition on its road. With La Vérendrye went his three sons, his nephew, a Jesuit missionary, some forty soldiers and carriers, and Ochagach as guide. No evil spirits appeared to affright the superstitious Canadians as their leader marched with them into the wilderness; the gods which might be supposed to guard the eternal solitude of the prairies from the intrusive activity of the white man remained auspiciously silent. But the cowardly fears of La Vérendrye's followers increased with every day's journey into the unknown; and they soon precipitated a mutiny which might have brought utter ruin upon the expedition. Several of the party absolutely refused to continue the march; and their leader was eventually forced to consent that half his men should remain behind with him at Kaministikwia, while the remainder pushed forward to the West under his nephew, La Jemeraye.

The crisis forced La Vérendrye to waste the long months of winter in an inaction that must have irked his very soul. The advance party left Kaministikwia at the end of August; but the snows came and went, spring blossomed in the wilds, and still no news was heard of La Jemeraye.

Not until near the close of the following May did he return; but when he appeared at last, it was at the head of a party laden with rich furs and bearing good news. They reported the discovery of a lake and river teeming with fish, woods full of game, and the erection of a station which had been named after the patron saint of La Vérendrye—Fort St. Pierre.

The lake was the Rainy Lake, the river was the Rainy River; a real step forward had again been made on the true path towards the West. Heartened by the news, the whole expedition set out on the 8th June over that immense belt of lakes and streams, of swamps and rapids, which makes the whole country between Superior and Winnipeg seem like a debatable district in which earth and water have long striven for the mastery over each other in vain.

A month later they stood within the stockade of Fort St. Pierre; but time was precious, and La Vérendrye again pushed on. A few marches more brought the expedition to the Lake of the Woods; and here another station, named Fort St. Charles, was erected on the peninsula which runs deep into the islet-studded waters.

Yet this was still not the western sea of which the explorers dreamed; and once more they prepared to obey the call of the West. Winter was again upon the party; but while the leader stayed among his men within the rude log-cabins of Fort St. Charles, his eldest son, Jean-Baptiste, went forward in snow-shoes through the white silent forest. The river of which Ochagach had spoken was now discovered; and young La Vérendrye followed the course of the winding Winnipeg in the full belief that it led to the open ocean.

At length the river ended. But one glance upon the turbid

waters that gave the lake into which it fell its native name of Winnipeg, was enough to assure the first white man who set foot upon that wind-swept shore that this was not the goal he sought. Fort Maurepas was built where lake and river meet; but still the unknown stretched on ahead—superb, immeasurable, vast, a silent mocker of the little band which hoped to wrest the secret of the ocean from the bosom of the prairie.

There was, indeed, the bare chance that further investigation might prove the fresh waters of Winnipeg to be those of some great inland arm of the Pacific. But the resources of the expedition were now at an end. La Vérendrye had failed in his quest. He was heavily in debt. His men refused to advance further without payment of their wages; and payment had become impossible. A second time appeal was made to the royal court for help; a second time it was refused.

Such rebuffs, however, were less formidable than the obstacles of Nature; and when La Vérendrye turned elsewhere for assistance, he found the merchants of Quebec more generous than the sovereign of France. They had profited considerably by the consignment of furs which had been sent down from Fort St. Pierre; and although they cared little for his hopes of discovery, they were not unwilling to finance a man whose travels helped to enlarge their business. The expedition was again equipped; and La Vérendrye, after a brief visit to the province of Quebec, turned his face a second time to the West.

But misfortune had not yet done with him. La Jemeraye, his nephew, who had been one of his most valuable assistants, had died suddenly during his absence. Provisions had run so short at Fort St. Charles that the garrison was nearly starved; and a grave disaster now overtook an expedition which was sent out to meet the fresh supplies coming up from Montreal. The party was attacked by the redskins, defeated,

and slain to a man. Alarmed at their non-appearance, search was made along the track they had followed; but only their decapitated corpses were discovered, their heads wrapped in beaver skins, and decked in derision with ornaments of quills.

Among those who perished was one of La Vérendrye's sons; but not even this bereavement could quench the father's passion for exploration. And meanwhile those who remained behind at Fort Maurepas had added considerably to their knowledge of the North-West. They had followed the southern coastline of Lake Winnipeg until they came to the Red River delta; they had then discovered a way past one of the reedy marshy channels through which the stream empties itself into the lake, and finally paddled up the main waterway as far as its junction with the river Assiniboine.

Unwittingly the Canadian pioneers had reached the place where the city of Winnipeg was to rise a century and a quarter later; but they seem hardly to have recognised the potential importance of the spot. A rough fort was built where the two streams meet, in what is now the heart of the Manitoban metropolis; and, leaving the main stream, the party proceeded to explore some fifty miles up the Assiniboine. Near the present city of Portage La Prairie they erected Fort La Reine, and then returned.

On the site of Winnipeg, 24th September 1738.

Other expeditions along the Red River followed; but La Vérendrye had now received news from the natives of a remarkable community of white men who were said to dwell on a great river lying further to the south-west. Once more he hoped to discover the stream which he believed would lead him to the western ocean; and on 16th October 1738, accompanied by a party of French Canadians and native guides, he set out from Fort La Reine. The expedition struck straight across the open prairie; but although delayed

for a while by the excessive hospitality of friendly tribes on the way, it reached the promised settlement of the Mandans without mishap.

But disappointment again awaited La Vérendrye. The Mandans, whom report had spoken of as white men, merely proved to be redskins of a more civilised type than those of Manitoba. And the river beside which the tribe was found to live led east instead of west; the explorer had struck the Missouri and not the expected waterway to the Pacific. The Canadians were forced to return baffled to Fort La Reine, fighting their way across the bleak open country against the keen winds and swirling heavy snows of winter, their leader ill, the men mutinous and dispirited.

A year later a more detailed account was received of bearded white men, who prayed to the Master of Life, and who dwelt in houses by the borders of a great lake whose waters were unfit to drink. La Vérendrye had already learned by bitter experience how little faith was to be placed in the information of the natives; but his persistence was as dogged as his courage, and he was still determined to lose no chance, however shadowy, that might lead to the solution of the problem which had now come to dominate his life. His two surviving sons were as ardent as himself; and, since their father had not yet recovered from the severe sickness which had attacked him on the return from the Missouri, they undertook the conduct of the new expedition early in the year 1742.

After reaching the country of their friends the Mandans, they journeyed in a west-south-westerly direction during twenty days. They passed the limits of the prairie country, they travelled through the Bad Lands of the Little Missouri, over 'earths of different colours, blue, green, red, or black, white as chalk, or yellowish like ochre'; and having interviewed many tribes, they obtained reports of redskins who were said to trade with the Spaniards of California.

Deserted by their original guides, the pioneers still pressed on westwards in the company of another tribe, until there appeared at length in the far distance a jagged outline as of a huge mountain chain. The omen was a happy one, for it occurred on the first day of the year 1743 ; and as the travellers pushed steadily forward, the mighty snow-surmounted peaks loomed distinctly on the horizon. It seemed clear that they had but to cross the range in order to behold the western ocean outstretched before them. Neither of the brothers can have realised what stupendous difficulties were ahead ; neither, as it happens, ever obtained the opportunity of realising how long and arduous a journey yet lay between them and the Pacific.

Fortune had thus far steadily befriended the brave Canadians. They had set foot in territories further west by hundreds of miles than any other white man had ever trod ; alone and unaided by their country, they had almost reached the last stage of the overland route to the West. But once more the prize was to be snatched away when it seemed nearly within their grasp. The tribe which they were accompanying suddenly began to fear the attack of a dreaded enemy, and fled back to its own district ; the two Canadians were forced unwillingly to retrace their steps and return. Slowly and by painful marches, made more bitter by reason of their disappointment, the brothers found their way back to Fort La Reine. The Mandans on the Missouri had given them up for dead ; their own people on the Assiniboine, where they arrived on 2nd July 1743, were hardly less surprised at their return after an absence of over a year.

The check which the young French-Canadian explorers thus received at the very moment when the success of their expedition appeared to be assured proved a forecast of the fate of their nation in America. The brothers had crossed the great West, and the land of their hopes seemed almost within reach ; but the prize was not for those who led the way.

The hour in which the two pioneers turned their backs upon the mountains signalised the close of their actual achievements; and the brilliant promise which opened out before the La Vérendrye family was destined never to be fulfilled, as the splendid prospects of empire which now opened out before France in the new world were likewise to be overclouded and dissipated within the next few years. The fates of the pioneers and of the empire were indeed closely allied. If the Canadian explorers had been assisted by their government, it is possible that the French would have had some share in the development as well as in the discovery of the West. But they were hindered rather than helped at every turn; and the same miserably unjust treatment which was meted out by the home authorities to the builders of the French power in India was the portion of the French pioneers in the West. In both cases the results were alike. The opportunities which had been created by French daring were sacrificed by French administrative folly; and once lost they never returned, either in the new world or in the old.

The Fall of French Power in America, 1743-63.

The La Vérendrye brothers were now to receive their full share of disappointment, and to learn by bitter experience how futile it was to combat the evil system of official corruption and neglect which was sapping the magnificent foundations of the French Empire in America. Their father died some six years after their return from the great expedition to the western mountains; but when the sons asked permission to continue his work of exploration, they were refused by the Governor of Quebec, who desired to exploit the western fur trade in his own interest. They were compelled to hand over the forts which they had built, and the supplies which they had collected; and henceforth the two sons have no more place in the chronicle of the overland route to the West than their dead father.

Their successor, one Captain Legardeur de Saint-Pierre,

was a man of very different stamp. A brave but unenterprising soldier, he appears to have taken little interest in exploration; and after a somewhat perfunctory attempt to reach the Pacific had failed, the project was tacitly abandoned. The excuse which Saint-Pierre advanced to cover his failure was eloquent of the coming political changes in America. He remarked that the redskins were hostile to the French, and that they were incited against the outposts of New France by the English traders of the north. 'It is evident,' he wrote, 'that so long as they trade with the English, there is no ground for the hope of succeeding in the discovery of the western sea. I believe I may even say, without risking too much, that they were the indirect authors of the ill-feeling.'

A man of stronger determination would have been ashamed of an excuse which admitted that his countrymen were feebler than their rivals; but it sufficed for Saint-Pierre and his degenerate superiors at Quebec. And whatever truth there may have been in his accusation against the English traders—it was an accusation which was brought by each nation against the other in turn—the power of Britain in America was now growing as steadily as that of France was diminishing.

But the final struggle came more rapidly, and it was more decisive in its effects than either nation had anticipated. Wolfe's victory on the Heights of Abraham in 1759 brought the central province of New France under British rule. The reduction of Montreal in the following year opened up the St. Lawrence; and when once the English had obtained control over the great river which led into the heart of the continent, the lakes and the West were certain soon to fall before them. Cut off from their base at Montreal and Quebec, the French forts in the interior possessed no independent power of resistance; and although Louisiana still belonged to France for yet a little while longer, any communication which the settlements on the Winnipeg might maintain with the wretched

capital at New Orleans involved a hazardous and extremely tedious journey along the whole course of the Mississippi. Both from a military and commercial standpoint that route was so difficult as to be impracticable; and the imposing chain of forts in the interior, which but a few years before had struck terror into the hearts of the English colonies on the Atlantic, fell one by one before the now dominant power in North America. Within a short time none were left; the future of the West lay in the hands of England.

The West in 1763.

The few years during which the French pioneers and traders had been exploring in the West exerted no more real influence upon its future than the transient clouds that lightly float across the prairies in early summer exert upon the harvest. The French had, indeed, bequeathed unwillingly a considerable amount of information to their English successors. If they had failed to reach the Pacific, they had at least crossed the great rolling plains and looked upon the western mountains. They had even planted a station near the Rockies. Further to the north-west, they had discovered the Winnipegosis and Manitoba Lakes as well as Winnipeg. They had followed the Saskatchewan some considerable distance along its course. They knew that the northern outlet of Lake Winnipeg flowed into the Hudson Bay. They had explored the Red River above its junction with the Assiniboine, as far, perhaps, as the present city of Emerson on the international boundary. They had established several stations on the far side of Lake Superior, such as those at Fort Bourbon on the Winnipegosis, and at Fort À La Corne in Saskatchewan.

But they had had neither the time nor the necessary population, even if they had possessed the necessary capacity, to develop the enormous territories they had discovered; and the sole traces that now remain to indicate the original presence of the French in western America must be sought in a few names that yet mark the maps of the continent,

and in a few half-forgotten traditions of the old trappers and fur-dealers who haggled and bartered beads and blankets with the redskin braves when Louis xv. was king. The cities of Detroit and St. Louis in the United States have changed everything but the names which were given them by their French founders in the days when the power of New France stretched directly from Michigan to the Gulf of Mexico. Many of the last forts established by the French in western Canada have been abandoned, while in rare cases even their situation is unknown: only a few survive to-day under the British dominion. The busy shipping and railway centre at Sault Sainte Marie is at least nominally faithful to the far-seeing Gallic traveller who first noticed the advantage of its situation at the head of the great lakes. The town of Portage La Prairie in Manitoba yet recalls a halt on the old French route across the rolling wilds. And the redskin tradition that a tributary of the Assiniboine was haunted by a spirit, whose voice was heard wailing and calling through the night watches, explains to the prosperous British agriculturist in modern Saskatchewan the reason why the French pioneers in that district gave its present name to the river Qu'Appelle.

All save these shadowy relics of the past have vanished. The French had aspired to control the future of western North America; but the completeness with which every tangible mark of their presence beyond Montreal has disappeared is explained by the paucity of inhabitants in their settlements. The whole population of Quebec was many times outnumbered by the people of New England alone: yet Quebec was populous in comparison with the more distant outposts. Detroit was an important centre; but in the year 1760 it contained only a thousand persons. The total population of the French stations along the left bank of the Mississippi from Ohio to St. Louis was calculated to be no more than two thousand and fifty, many of whom were merely passing travellers. A few French traders and

missionaries dwelt in Illinois and Wisconsin; a few more were located at each establishment in Manitoba and the Far West: but it is doubtful whether they numbered a thousand in all. New France, in short, was a skeleton of magnificent proportions: but it was never anything more than a skeleton.

The West, therefore, passed to Britain in 1763. But for some years to come Britain had no conception that her new territories were worthy of development or even of preservation. There was a general belief that north-western and western America was little better than a frozen wilderness; and that belief persisted obstinately in the face of repeated contradictions and disproofs. The deepest ignorance on the subject prevailed, in fact, not only in England, but even among the English in America; nor was one reason for that ignorance far to seek. The Hudson's Bay Company was the only British corporation engaged in western commerce, and that Company had always strongly opposed the intrusion of any rival within the sphere of its operations. It had no real interest in, and it had done nothing to promote, the exploration of the country. It had founded no stations in the interior, and it had never attempted to colonise. It had gained little information beyond what was essential to its trade; and most assuredly it had distributed none.

Such tactics made for good dividends to the shareholders; they were useless for any other purpose. But younger and more energetic competitors were now about to enter the field, whose opposition roused the Hudson's Bay Company from its century of lethargy, and whose activity completed the exploration and began the settlement of the West, besides gaining considerable fortunes for the pioneers themselves.

The Rival Fur-Traders.

The headquarters of this opposition lay at first in Montreal, the original centre of the French-Canadian fur trade; but the new pioneers of the North-West were almost entirely of Scottish extraction. And when we remember how completely the earlier Caledonian enterprises

overseas had failed, in Nova Scotia, in Panama, and in India,[1] it is surprising to remark the extraordinary ability and success with which Scottish adventurers now surmounted every obstacle before them. There is a world of difference between the abortive projects of a Sir William Alexander or a Darien Company in the seventeenth century and the achievements of the Mackenzies, MacTavishes, MacGillivrays, and MacLeods of the North-West Company in the eighteenth ; and although the difference is partially accounted for by the increased opportunities which the Act of Union had opened out to Scotsmen since the year 1707, much must still be accredited to the stern discipline and excellent education which had in the meantime become traditional in every Scottish home. The empire owes much to Scotland, as Scotland in turn owes much to the empire ; but nowhere is the mutual obligation greater than in the Canadian North-West, which was pioneered and largely peopled by men of Scottish origin and upbringing.

With the fall of the French outposts in the West the overland commerce in furs was temporarily dislocated, and all search for an overland route to the Pacific abandoned for a time. Trade and discovery were still further hindered by the outbreak of Pontiac's War in 1763, a redskin war in the West which the French were suspected of having incited ; but even before its conclusion the first overland British travellers had already appeared at the Rainy Lake. These too venturesome traders were plundered of their canoes by the natives ; and on making another attempt the following year, they again suffered the same embarrassing experience. Twelve months later, in 1767, the dogged traders arrived once more ; but on this occasion perseverance received its traditional if not invariable reward. The pioneers, whose names have not been recorded, were allowed to continue their journey ;

[1] For the Scots in Nova Scotia, see bk. xi. ch. ii. ; in Panama, bk. iv. ch. iii. For the abortive Scottish East India Company, bk. vi. ch. iv.

and they succeeded in reaching Fort La Reine on the Assiniboine, where they entered into commercial relations with the redskins of the district.

It would appear that the traffic was sufficiently profitable to compensate them for their previous losses. At any rate, other British traders followed in their wake, including Alexander Henry the elder, and Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher, men whose names afterwards became notable as founders of the North-West Company of Montreal. Regular dealings with the natives were now established in many of the places where the French traders had built their forts; and within a few years the overland fur trade was again following its accustomed route. Scotsmen were generally at the head of these enterprises; but they wisely availed themselves, whenever it was possible to do so, of the services of the old French-Canadian traders and trappers, many of whom still remained in Montreal after New France had passed to the British.

The British adventurers, however, were more successful in the business than the French had been. The latter had never seriously incommoded the Hudson's Bay Company by the extent of their trade with the redskins; but the competition of the British merchants at Montreal soon affected that slow-moving corporation so severely that it was forced to abandon its traditional policy of inaction on the shores of the bay. By the admission of its own officials, the 'pedlars,' as the servants of the Company contemptuously called the Montreal traders, 'intercepted great part of Fort York trade this year 1772'; and the immediate result was the establishment of a Hudson Bay post at Fort Cumberland on the Saskatchewan River in 1774.

But the agents of the North-West Company had equally little patience with the various independent merchants who associated neither with the London nor the Montreal corporations. The Hudson's Bay Company was of recognised standing,

and the keen rivalry between the two did not always bar personal friendship between the accredited agents of either firm; but the free traders who competed against both Companies were stigmatised by Alexander Henry, one of the great Montreal fur-traders, as 'mongrels, upon whom no dependence was to be placed; with neither principles, nor honour, nor honesty, nor a wish to do well; their aim all folly, extravagance, and caprice, making more mischief than the most savage Blackfeet in the plains.' Yet probably the worst sin of the independent traders was their presumption in encroaching on the preserves of the North-West Company, in precisely the same manner that the North-West Company had encroached on the preserves of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Between these various traders was the rich prize of the fur traffic debated for many years. But for some time at least few of those who engaged in the traffic had any impulse towards exploration; it was enough for them that business prospered and wealth flowed in. The British fur-traders, in fact, hardly reached so far into the unknown West during the first decade after the Seven Years' War as their old French rivals had already done; and any schemes of discovery that were put forward came either from official or outside sources.

Such, for instance, was the project of Carleton, the new Governor of Canada, who suggested that the whole North-West should be thoroughly explored, and its rivers and streams mapped out by British officers; but the Imperial Government of the day had other matters on hand at that time, and was more concerned to tax the old English colonies in America than to discover the resources of the new English territories, which, indeed, were generally considered of little value.

On the other hand, one Jonathan Carver, a New Englander who was at some pains to compile a book of *Travels through the Interior Parts of North America* from other persons' writings, was firmly convinced that the North-West, of which he had some personal knowledge, was a land of vast potential

wealth and greatness. 'Probably in future ages,' he declared, the Rocky Mountains would 'be found to contain more riches in their bowels than those of Indostan and Malabar, or the golden coast of Guinea; nor will I except even the Peruvian mines. To the west of these mountains, when explored by future Columbuses or Raleghs, may be found other lakes, rivers, and countries, fraught with all the necessaries or luxuries of life; and where future generations may find an asylum, whether driven from their country by lawless tyrants, or religious persecutions, or reluctantly leaving it to remedy the inconveniences arising from a superabundant increase of inhabitants; whether, I say, impelled by these, or allured by hopes of commercial advantages, there is little doubt that their expectations will be fully gratified.'

Carver's rhapsodic prediction was less wide of the truth than are the forecasts of most modern prophets; but his sanguine belief was shared by few people, either in England or America, at that time. And it was through the energies of individuals, rather than any encouragement offered by governments or trading corporations, that the exploration of the North-West was carried on.

But it was the bleak and barren North, not the golden West, which attracted the first great English explorers. It is true that even while French influence was still strong on the prairies one Anthony Hendry, a traveller for the Hudson's Bay Company, had struck inland to the south-west; and when he discovered the Saskatchewan River on 21st July 1754, he was the first Englishman to set eyes on that important stream, which was already familiar to Gallic adventurers.

Towards the North, 1769-88.

Courteously but somewhat suspiciously received by the French traders of the district, who were politely sceptical as to the value to themselves of Hendry's mission, he returned to York Factory on the bay, where his enthusiastic account of the resources of the country he had visited was somewhat

chilled by the unflattering reception that proverbially awaits a traveller's tales.

From that time the British traders busied themselves for many years in establishing forts and trading stations in the old French territory; but the two great pioneers of Canadian exploration turned northward to the Arctic.

On many occasions during the first hundred years of their establishment along the bay, the governors and agents of the Hudson's Bay Company had heard the garrulous redskins describe the rich deposits of copper which were said to exist near a great river in the Far North. For long the British fur-traders, less credulous or less enterprising than their French rivals, either did not believe the information or did not trouble to verify or refute it; but in the year 1769 Governor Norton, who possessed a more inquisitive mind than most of his predecessors in charge of the Hudson Bay forts, came to the decision that 'it would be very useful to clear up this point, if possible, in order to prevent further doubts from arising hereafter respecting a passage out of Hudson Bay into the western ocean.' He therefore instructed Samuel Hearne, who had begun life as a sailor in the Eskimo trade, and was now employed at Fort Churchill, to discover what truth might lie behind these rumours of wealth.

Samuel Hearne's Expeditions, 1769-72.

The governor's choice of a pathfinder was a good one, for Hearne was both plucky and persistent in conquering the difficulties which beset him. The record of the discoveries he made in the face of many discouragements is, indeed, his own best testimony to his ability.

He left the fort on 6th November 1769; but his native guides deserted him when he had proceeded two hundred miles to the north, and he was forced to grope his way back alone as best he could. A second journey, which began in the following February, would have ended after eight months' travelling in much the same manner had not Hearne, on his

return to Fort Churchill, fortunately encountered a friendly redskin, who fed and clothed the half-dead traveller, and offered to accompany him as guide should he still cherish the desire to explore the North.[1]

Hearne gratefully accepted the kindly offer; and after a few days' rest at Fort Prince of Wales, he started on his third and most important expedition on 7th December 1770. Westwards they travelled day after day through the winter months, in a country stocked with abundant game; and when the spring drew on and the herds of caribou at length returned to their summer haunts far in the north, the redskin guides knew that the season for discovery had arrived. Northwards now they went with Hearne through a vast district which no European had ever seen before, following the lengthening sun over barren lands towards that ultimate horizon where continuous daylight warned the explorer that he had passed within the limits of the Arctic circle.

A well-used native trail, which Hearne described as being 'plain and well beaten as any footpath in England,' now led directly to the Coppermine River; and on the 13th July 1771, a week after they had encountered a blinding snowstorm, the traveller had his first view of the stream he sought.

But the Coppermine, far from being the mighty river which the redskins had described, proved in reality merely a shallow and hardly navigable torrent, full of shoals and rapids. And the celebrated copper-mines were not less disappointing, for on examination they were discovered to be 'nothing but a jumble of rocks and gravel'; and whereas the natives had promised that a whole ship could be loaded with the ore, the Englishman found but one small piece of copper, four pounds in weight, after a search of several hours. It was not the first time that the vivid imagination of the aborigines had led the covetous white man on a fool's errand.

[1] For a whole desperate week on this second journey Hearne was reduced to living on cranberries, scraps of leather, and burnt bones.

Of all this country, disappointing though it was, Hearne took formal possession for his employers; and after he had been an unwilling witness of a massacre of the Eskimo by his redskin guides—a massacre which is still commemorated by the name of Bloody Fall on the Coppermine River—Hearne turned southwards.

His hopes had come to nothing, but nevertheless his journey had not failed. He was the first Englishman who had seen the Arctic Ocean from the north-west coast of America; the first white man who had crossed the vast plains of the Far North, and the first great British explorer in a country which the English people had hardly yet realised was their own.[1]

On the return journey in 1772, Hearne crossed the Great Slave Lake, the existence of which was now for the first time definitely ascertained; but when he arrived back on the shores of the Hudson's Bay, he turned no more to the North. Other work now awaited him; and in 1774 we find him camping in the western interior of the continent on the Saskatchewan River. Here he founded Cumberland House for the Hudson's Bay Company, an establishment which in course of time became one of the great emporia of the West, and a thorn in the side of the North-West Company of Montreal.

Samuel Hearne's record as an explorer was completed when he returned from the Coppermine River, and his later years were rewarded with the dignified post of Governor of Prince of Wales Fort. But another and a greater pathfinder through the unknown wilderness now took up his mantle of discovery; and the work of Alexander Mackenzie bulks larger in the

[1] Much of the country which Hearne explored was not again traversed by white men until the officers of the Canadian Geological Survey covered it thoroughly in the last decade of the nineteenth century. They demonstrated, what indeed was already known, that Hearne's measurements were far from accurate; he was as much as two hundred miles out in his location of the mouth of the Coppermine. But he was unfortunate enough to lose or break his instruments several times, and he had probably had little scientific training in taking observations. On the other hand, his general description of the country he explored is lively, interesting, and accurate.

eventful history of the North-West Territories than that of any of his compeers in the fur trade.

Like most of the pioneers who more or less willingly opened up Canada to the outer world while scouring the interior for profitable trade, Alexander Mackenzie was a Scot. Born at Stornoway in the Isle of Lewis, an island which at that period was almost as lonely and inaccessible as a trading station on the Hudson Bay, in the same year that the French ceded Canada to Britain, young Mackenzie found his way to Montreal in the palmy days of the Canadian fur trade.

Alexander Mackenzie, 1763-1820.

The youth was ambitious, the time was favourable ; and Mackenzie was not long before he made his mark. In 1785, when he was still only twenty-two years of age, he was already in charge of the trade in the extensive Churchill River district ; perhaps he had even then begun to ponder those daring schemes of exploration, the first of which he carried out four summers later.

But whatever his thoughts, the cautious Scot kept them to himself, merely outlining his general project to a cousin whom he bound to strict secrecy. In 1788 he started for Lake Athabasca, where he remained some time at Fort Chipewyan, a trading station which had been founded on the shores of the lake some years before, and which soon became celebrated as a centre for the trappers of the middle North-West ; and on 3rd June 1789, he set out for the Arctic.

Four French-Canadian voyageurs, a young German, a red-skin chief with his two wives, and a couple of interpreters and hunters, accompanied Mackenzie on his journey. Paddling to the mouth of the Slave River, which unites Lake Athabasca with the Great Slave Lake, they passed down that swift and dangerous stream, negotiating its rapids with some difficulty, until they came to the lower sheet of water.

Although it was early summer now and the foliage at its full, the cold was intense, and the whole lake was still

frozen over; and Mackenzie, to whom every hour of the short northern season was of value, was compelled to wait during five impatient days before a passage opened through the ice. Even then the navigation of the lake was hazardous and slow; one night after another he was forced to camp on the islets which stud its waters, having only advanced a few miles at most from the halting-place of the previous evening.

Ten days of this tedious work brought the party to the northern shore of the Great Slave Lake, where they searched for the outlet which Mackenzie believed must drain this great body of water into the Arctic Ocean. Passing the considerable bay into which the Yellowknife River flows from the north, he pushed onwards for nearly a week without discovering what he sought; but at length, near the far western extremity of the lake, and almost hidden by a large island, the travellers lighted on the important stream which has ever since borne Mackenzie's name.

Bent on discovery as he was, the explorer had not neglected the commercial aspect of his journey, and had discussed the congenial subjects of barter and trade with the redskins who inhabited the shores of the Great Slave Lake; but even they could tell him little of the lands which lay to the north. Nothing daunted at the lack of information, the party moved steadily on.

The river narrowed as they followed its westerly course, and the current therefore quickened. The journey was now speedy, for a breeze at their backs helped the travellers as well as the rapid stream; but caution was necessary, for Mackenzie had heard rumours of a great rapid lower down the river, and the swift current gave some weight to the report.

The stream led ever westwards until, on 3rd July, the party came in sight of the Rocky Mountains, which stretched 'as far as the view could reach to the southward, and whose tops were lost in the clouds; they appeared to be sprinkled with

white stones, which glistened in the sun, and were called by the natives *manetoe aseniah,* or spirit stones.'

Further investigation showed these stones to be nothing more than patches of snow ; but it was Mackenzie's purpose to follow the river, not to explore the great range of western mountains ; and the river now turned suddenly northwards.

All possible haste was necessary, for the summer was passing rapidly, the distance yet to be explored was uncertain, and every step forward lengthened the return journey, which must be made against stream and in the shortening days when the approach of winter darkness meant the approach of death. The travellers were not too well provisioned, and they could not hope to live by hunting, since even the wild beasts desert the high latitudes they had now reached in winter.

The temper of the redskins, too, was uncertain, and their minds were filled with fear ; they told Mackenzie of mysterious monsters that guarded the regions he was about to traverse, of a terrible being that swallowed every person who ventured within its reach. And the bravest of the natives assured him that several winters must certainly elapse before he reached the sea, and that old age would overtake him on the way even if death spared him for a while.

Frightened like children by the terrors of their own creation, the natives would have deserted Mackenzie ; but that masterful fur-trader compelled obedience to his will. The brave but superstitious French Canadians, however, showed no sign of the fears they may have felt as they entered this forbidding region, and responded cheerfully to their leader's call for yet greater exertions as they neared the still distant goal.

The rapids against which the party had been warned were now safely passed ; some miles lower down the river suddenly contracted to five hundred yards, to make its way through the majestic heights of limestone on either bank which have been appropriately named the Mackenzie Ramparts.

Soon afterwards the river again widened, spreading its broad volume into several channels, among which it became difficult to identify the main stream ; and at this point the native guide rebelled. Yet had he but realised the fact, it was a sign that the object of his master was almost accomplished ; for the river had but widened where it neared the ocean, as a dying man's attention will sometimes wander into many trains of thought towards the close.

But Mackenzie, whose mind was disturbed at the fast diminishing stock of provisions available for the return, was no wiser here than the redskins ; and he promised to retrace his steps if the sea were not reached within the week.

Two days later, on 12th July, the river again widened, and the travellers soon found themselves in what they believed to be a lake of considerable size. It was, in fact, the entrance to the Arctic Ocean.

No land was seen ahead, whales were observed in the water, and the incoming tide nearly washed away the baggage of the expedition ; but still Mackenzie doubted if he had yet reached the object of his search.

From the redskin tribes of the district he could obtain no certain information. They told him, indeed, of a white man's lake near by, of a mighty river compared with which the Mackenzie was a puny stream ; and they had other marvellous stories, of gigantic men possessed of wings, who fed on great birds and killed common folk with their eyes. But beyond these incredible reports, which made no impression whatever on so clear-headed a man as Alexander Mackenzie, nothing could be gleaned from the natives ; and the party turned back for the long march to Fort Chipewyan. It is characteristic of the caution which was as strong a feature of Mackenzie's character as his daring enterprise, that even after he had seen the Arctic tide rise thrice, he was still uncertain whether he had accomplished his enterprise.

When Mackenzie arrived at the fort on Lake Athabasca

on 12th September 1789, he had already conceived the idea of undertaking another great expedition of discovery.

Towards the West, 1792.

The North had proved barren and uninhabitable; and although a few trading houses were founded there some years later—Fort Providence on the Great Slave Lake in 1790, and on the Mackenzie River, Fort Livingstone in 1796, Fort Good Hope in 1804, and Fort Norman in 1810—it was quite evident that the commercial possibilities of the region were limited. The West, on the other hand, was still unknown. There were rumours of gold on the great mountains; there was almost certainly a large fur trade to be done; and—a point that Mackenzie and the merchants of Montreal would certainly appreciate at its full value—their rivals from the Hudson Bay were now beginning to show considerable activity in the Far West, particularly along the two great branches of the Saskatchewan River. When others had reached the Rocky Mountains, Mackenzie determined that it was time for him to reach the sea.

He set about his project with the careful diligence that, allied with the daring he had already shown in his first expedition, gave the best promise of success. He visited England for a few months to improve his scientific knowledge; and immediately on his return to Fort Chipewyan began his preparations for the march.

On 10th October 1792, Mackenzie left the fort for the West, taking with him a few men and a couple of canoes laden with supplies. He was still a few months short of thirty years of age.

Rapidly pushing forward against stream up the Peace River, he reached the junction with the Smoky River early in November, where he had arranged to spend the winter. An advance party that had left Fort Chipewyan some time before had already begun to build a fort for the accommodation of the party at this spot—at that time the most westerly settlement of the white man in North America.

The winter passed uneventfully, the redskins of the place telling Mackenzie of a great river beyond the mountains which flowed directly towards the setting sun. Whatever belief the Scottish explorer may have been inclined to place in their stories was not strengthened by the fact that they had not themselves ever crossed the Rockies; and he must have remembered somewhat ruefully the utterly untrustworthy character of the information supplied by the natives in his earlier expedition to the Arctic. However, some of the redskins now agreed to accompany him westwards, and to give him what assistance they could.

Early in the following spring, on 9th May 1793, Mackenzie started with his native guides and six French Canadians on his long march, while the redskins who were left behind shed tears at the thought of the dangers which menaced the little party.

As they ascended the Peace River, the scenery was extremely beautiful, game was abundant, and good progress was made for several days. Higher up, however, the river became an almost continuous series of rapids; and the canoe, which only narrowly escaped disaster several times in the boiling stream, had to be hauled the greater part of the way along banks of jagged rock.

The men were now discouraged, and muttered sullenly that they must return, since it was already useless and dangerous, and would soon become impossible, to proceed. Their complaints made no difference to Mackenzie's resolution; and, having discovered that although the river was unnavigable for the next nine miles, smooth waters opened again beyond, he ordered the canoe to be carried to that point. The men obeyed their leader.

Hauling the canoe in some places, warping it round tree trunks in steeper stretches, cutting a rough road through the woods and dense thickets that impeded their path, the party dragged their burden day after day along that difficult reach.

But even at the end of the nine miles their troubles were not yet finished; for it was discovered that the stream was now confined in a narrow bed between high banks, and that no vessel, however lightly and strongly built, could live in that impetuous current. Once more, therefore, the canoe was dragged forward, but at length they were able to take to the stream again.

A little higher up, the Peace River divided; and on the advice of a native guide, although somewhat contrary to his own inclination, Mackenzie took the southern branch. The river was in full flood, a whole afternoon's labour was only rewarded with two or three miles' advance, and the men were again in despair. Even the anxious Mackenzie admitted that 'the inexpressible toil these people had endured, as well as the dangers they encountered, required some degree of consideration.'

But the resolution of the leader knew no bounds; and while he cheered his exhausted party, he was determined to push onwards at all hazards. The Rocky Mountains had long been visible ahead, and the joy of pioneering a new land, of doing first what other men had not yet done at all, filled the heart of the explorer.

He was now near the realisation of his ambitions. The party had followed the Parsnip River to its source; a march of eight hundred and seventeen paces brought them to another stream. But whereas the Parsnip flowed east and north to the Arctic, the river they now discovered flowed west. They had crossed the watershed of the American continent; they had found the key to the discovery of the Pacific Ocean.

Mackenzie knew not how far distant the ocean might be; but the raging torrent along which his course now lay—a torrent which a later explorer, who suffered equally from its wild westward rush, named the Bad River—showed that the streams on the far side of the Rocky Mountains must reach the sea more quickly than the rivers of eastern Canada.

So swift was its course, so treacherous its rapids and whirlpools, so dangerous the driftwood and the debris which it bore along with the force of an avalanche, that the canoe was nearly wrecked again and again. Bow and stern were damaged by colliding with a rock; one member of the crew was thrown out on a sandbank, another who attempted to check the speed was jerked ashore. At the end of the reach, when the canoe was at last piloted into shallow water, it was found that several holes had been knocked in its bottom.

Once more the men were ready to mutiny; once more Mackenzie prevailed. Cheering the hearts of his followers with a good meal and a measure of rum, he appealed to their courage and fidelity; and the appeal was not in vain. The canoe was repaired; and when it was found that the junction of the Bad River with a great navigable stream was blocked by an impenetrable barrier of accumulated driftwood, a road was cut through the thickets until the larger waterway was reached. That larger waterway was the river which has since been called by the name of the explorer who followed Mackenzie's track across the mountains a few years later—Simon Fraser.

An occasional rapid now barred the way, and the few natives who could be induced to speak with the white man told him of many more such obstacles lower down the stream. They assured him, in fact, that the course of the Fraser River was long and extraordinarily difficult, whereas he would be able to reach the ocean within six days if he struck due westwards overland. It was this latter route which they advised him to follow.

Mackenzie had too often been misled by the information which the redskins proffered to give too easy credence to their words; but on this occasion their statements seemed to be true, for they gave evidence of intercourse with the white traders who were already to be found on the Pacific coast. Another point that weighed with Mackenzie in his decision

to abandon the river was the fact that he had but a month's provisions in hand; yet he was determined that, if he missed his path overland, he would return and follow the river to the ocean. Long or short, safe or dangerous, tedious or delightful, as the course of the yet unnamed and unexplored Fraser might be, it at least led indubitably to the Pacific.

His companions responded bravely to his appeal, assuring him that whither he went they would also go; and at the spot where Fort Alexandria was afterwards erected, the expedition turned backwards up the Fraser for a space, and soon struck due westwards towards the sea. Some of the natives they encountered proved friendly, others hostile; but although matters looked threatening at times, no serious troubles arose, and from this time the evidences multiplied rapidly that European traders were already well known along the coast.[1]

But they were still far from the sea, and many weary marches and disappointments were yet in store before the blue waters of the Pacific burst upon their view. Day after day they pressed onwards through a beautiful country of forests and streams, where fruit was as plentiful on the trees as the fish in the waters, and where the lordly salmon was as common as the cod on the Newfoundland bank or the herring shoals on Mackenzie's native shores.

It was indeed a fertile and a pleasant land to which Mackenzie had brought his patient comrades; but summer was passing, and the longed-for vision of the western ocean seemed ever to recede into the sunset, leaving but the black disappointment of night and frustrated hopes behind.

At length the vision came. On the morning of 20th July 1793, Alexander Mackenzie found that the river whose course he had been following widened into a bay; and the waters of that bay were salt. His ambition was realised. He had

[1] Among other things, two English halfpennies were found in use as native ornaments; a strange destiny for the effigy of George III.

travelled across the continent from Atlantic to Pacific. He had succeeded where every other pioneer before him had failed. He had found the overland path to the Pacific.

But what a path it was! Mountains such as Europe had none to rival, rivers longer and more difficult than any Europe had to show, vast plains in which the kingdoms of the old world could be lost, and which only the buffalo and the red-skin shared with the sun and the winds—all these lay between the eastern and western limits of the continent, all these had to be crossed before the traveller reached the spot where the successful explorer now proudly painted his name in vermilion paint upon a rock, 'Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada, by land, the twenty-second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three.'

Had the Scot been superstitious, he might have imagined that the pale ghosts of the earlier explorers, who had failed to discover the path which he had only found at the price of so much pain and preparation, now watched him at this supreme moment of his life; that La Salle and Vérendrye, Hudson and Baffin, Devonshire Gilbert and Ralegh, were by his side in spirit as he listened to the music of the ocean surging on the shore. But the practical fur-trader gave no sign of such ethereal thoughts; and after a stay of a few days on the coast, he turned back to cross the Rockies on his homeward march.

But success was won; the West was opened, and those who came after Mackenzie—a notable body of men, among whom Simon Fraser, David Thompson, and George Simpson stand well to the fore—had but to follow in his steps, and search out what he had missed in his rapid march from east to west.

The rough outlines of the north and west of Canada had now been mapped out by three generations of explorers, trappers, and traders. The overland routes to the Pacific and Arctic Oceans were discovered. Trading stations were soon scattered at convenient spots the whole length of the wilderness.

By the early years of the nineteenth century the fur-dealers had established themselves in such remote places as Fort Vermilion on the Peace River, at Fort Good Hope on the far Mackenzie River, and even across the Rocky Mountains at Forts Fraser and St. James, in the country that later times were to know as British Columbia.

The Canadian West in 1810.

Each fort accommodated a few men, with perhaps one or two women and their more or less legitimate children ; the men were generally employed by one or other of the great trading Companies, the women were probably redskins and the children half-breeds, whose strength and skill had become proverbial on the prairies. Some of the descendants of the old French settlers also remained in the land, and the work of transporting the furs was often undertaken by the French *coureurs du bois*, in whose ranks a strong strain of aboriginal blood was visible. And there were also a certain number of independent traders, whose competition made no very serious difference to the profits of the two great Companies.

Such was the European population of the Canadian West in the early nineteenth century : such it seemed likely to remain. Beyond the wooden stockades of the various forts, there were no white people on the prairies ; and neither the Hudson's Bay Company nor the North-West Company intended that the vast territories which they controlled should ever be occupied by strangers. They knew well enough that when the farmer came the trapper must go ; the colonist would wage war on the wild beasts which furnished the fur-trader with his livelihood, and the agricultural development of the West must spell loss and possibly even ruin to the stockholders of the two great corporations of London and Montreal.

The first sign of danger to their interests came from an unexpected quarter. Among the numerous readers of Alexander Mackenzie's account of his travels into the North-

West was a young Scottish nobleman, the seventh son of the fourth Earl of Selkirk, who had unexpectedly succeeded to his father's title in the year 1799, at the age of twenty-eight. When Mackenzie's book was published, Selkirk was an active, energetic man of thirty; he had visited the Continent, he had watched the course of the French Revolution, and had planned and published a scheme of national defence. The Canadian pioneer's travels turned his thoughts to the possibilities awaiting the colonist of a new country; his own travels in Scotland had shown him the poverty of the Highlanders, and the need of improving the condition of that magnificent race of men. To a person of Selkirk's energy and resources, the thought and the deed were intimately allied; and in 1802 he made a request to the British Government for permission to found a colony on the shores of Lake Winnipeg.

Lord Selkirk, 1771-1820.

The project failed to commend itself to the authorities; but Selkirk did not on that account abandon his plans. In the following year he visited Canada, and introduced himself to the Scottish traders in Montreal, who welcomed a fellow-Scot of wealth and title as a distinguished addition to their somewhat limited social circle. Quietly maturing his ideas, Selkirk obtained as much information as they could or would give him concerning the West; and on his return to England, he purchased a controlling interest in the Hudson's Bay Company.

The keen competition of the North-West Company had caused the shares of its elder rival to fall considerably in value, or even a far wealthier man than Selkirk could hardly have adopted this heroic course; but with the purchase of control, he made ready for a fundamental alteration in the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company.

An enormous tract of one hundred and sixteen thousand square miles of virgin land was purchased, part of which now lies in the province of Manitoba, and part across the inter-

national boundary; and on this great territory, through the whole of which the Red River flows, Selkirk prepared to settle his people. Penniless Highlanders and equally poor Irishmen mainly composed his choice; altogether some seventy men set sail from the Orkneys on 26th July 1811.

The Selkirk Settlers, 1811.

The party landed at the York Factory of the Hudson's Bay Company on 5th October; and the long northern winter, which they were forced to spend on the shores of the bay before proceeding to their destination in the interior, did not pass without disputes. 'The Irish,' wrote the leader of the band, 'displayed their native propensity and prowess on the first night of the year, by unmercifully beating some Orkneymen. Too much strong drink was the chief incitement.'

These and other troubles or amusements over, the colonists struck inland on 6th July 1812. They followed the regular track of the Hudson's Bay Company traders to the interior, across those waste and dreary lands which rise gradually from the shallow waters of the bay, and which in some earlier epoch, perhaps, formed the bed of a great inland sea.

Nearly two months were spent on the tedious journey of seven hundred and forty miles from York Factory to Lake Winnipeg, where Selkirk had determined to found his colony; on 30th August the settlers at last ended their travels, and camped for the first time on the site of the modern city of Winnipeg. They chose a spot facing the Red River, about a mile below its junction with the Assiniboine; at no great distance was the fort and factory of the Hudson's Bay Company. Except for the occupants of the latter, and the rival traders of the North-West Company, and a few French traders on the opposite side of the river, the colonists were solitary and isolated on the great plains.

For the first few years they had a desperate struggle to live. They had no money—which indeed would have been of small use to them—and few provisions. In their first season

little preparation was possible against the hard winter of the North-Western plains, for they did not arrive at Winnipeg until the summer was waning. Even with the active assistance of Governor Miles Macdonell, who was in charge of the party, and the fur-traders of the neighbourhood, they suffered some hardships in the rough dwellings which had been run up for their accommodation at Pembina, sixty miles away.

The Colony founded at Winnipeg, 1812.

The winter over, they began to break up the ground for the crops; but although they were located on one of the most fertile soils in the world, the virgin ground was heavy, the settlers had no implements except a hoe, and the Scottish crofters who formed the bulk of the colony were poor farmers at the best of times. For months they lived mainly on fish caught in the Red River, and on the wild fruit and shrubs of the plains; the following winter they were again compelled to return to Pembina.

Other troubles now came thick and fast. That season the snows were heavy on the plains, and the buffalo, on which Selkirk's people largely depended for sustenance, was scarce. The building of a fort at Pembina, too, had changed the feeling of the North-West Company regarding the new settlers from contemptuous pity to anger; and a stupid proclamation by Governor Macdonell, forbidding any flesh, grain, or vegetables to be taken from the country by any person or company of traders, brought matters nearer to the inevitable crisis.

Enmity of the Fur-Traders.

It soon became clear that there would be a hard struggle before the fur-traders allowed the sovereignty of the vast country they had discovered to be claimed by the leader of the new colony; but fresh parties of Selkirk's pioneers now arrived from Scotland, and as each new group of agricultural settlers reached the heart of the West, the enmity of the North-West Company became more pronounced. Mackenzies and MacGillivrays as fur-traders were well

enough in the eyes of the Scottish merchants of Montreal; but when Campbells, McKays, and Bannermans entered the sacred country of the trapper as simple farmers, the fur-traders determined to strike, and to strike hard.

At first, indeed, diplomacy and cajolery were tried, and not without considerable success. Most of the Selkirk settlers had grown weary of the ceaseless struggle with Nature in the western wilds; and when the agents of the North-West Company offered them free transport to Ontario, and free land—two hundred acres for every family—in the neighbourhood of market towns in that prosperous and comfortable province, many determined to accept the offer. No fewer than one hundred and forty out of two hundred of the Selkirk colonists decided to desert the Red River settlement for the easier conditions of eastern Canada; and in June 1815 they began that long and dangerous journey across the wilds, the woods, and the lakes, which La Vérendrye had first adventured eighty years before.

Ten days later, on 25th June, the weakened remnant of the Selkirk colony was given summary notice to quit by an agent of the North-West Company in these laconic words: 'All settlers to retire immediately from Red River, and no trace of a settlement to remain.' The document was signed by one Cuthbert Grant, whose enmity to the settlement was not appeased even by this drastic step.

Thirteen families now left their homes, and the buildings which they had so painfully and so recently erected were at once fired. The governor of the colony had already been captured and sent to Montreal, a prisoner of the North-West Company.

No more than one small outpost now remained, a Hudson's Bay Company's house, in charge of John McLeod. This, however, furnished an unexpected and successful resistance. McLeod possessed only one three-pounder cannon and a little powder, but several lengths of chain were procured from a

smithy near by, and when cut up into pieces, this improvised ammunition furnished deadly shot. With three or four men the sturdy Scot held out against the North-West Company for several days, until the baffled assailants withdrew to a respectful distance ; the defence had lost one man killed.

Once again the Selkirk colony was restored, with fresh settlers and another governor, Captain Robert Semple. But the new leader proved as little to the taste of the fur-traders as the old ; and whereas Macdonell had only proclaimed his sovereignty over the country, Semple made a direct attack on Fort Gibraltar, a station which the North-West Company had built some years before.

Fort Gibraltar was situated at the fork formed by the union of the Assiniboine and the Red Rivers. It fell before Semple in October 1815 ; but its fall was speedily avenged by the enraged Montreal traders. The redskins and half-breeds of the neighbourhood were incited against the intruding agriculturists without much difficulty ; and early on the evening of 19th June 1816, a numerous party made a concerted attack on Fort Douglas, the new headquarters of the Selkirk settlers, which had been built in the previous year in the bend of the river below Fort Gibraltar.

The assailants were by far the stronger party, and they had no intention of giving quarter. Fort Douglas was captured ; Governor Semple and many of the settlers were killed at Seven Oaks, lower down the Red River ; and all the property of the Selkirk colony was taken possession of by the same agent of the North-West Company, Cuthbert Grant, who had already made himself conspicuous by his enmity.

The news that his colony was destroyed reached Lord Selkirk in Montreal. He had already discovered that his old friends, the Scottish fur-traders of that city, were now his bitterest enemies ; but however strong their opposition, he had no intention of abandoning his scheme.

The Colony again Established, 1817.

But it was obvious that something more than peaceful settlement was now necessary; and fortunately for Selkirk, there happened to be two regiments of Swiss mercenaries in Canada at that time. They had been fighting for the British colony against the United States in the war of 1812; but peace having been made, and their services being therefore no longer required, Selkirk found it easy to engage with them to form a half-military, half-agricultural settlement on the Red River. The Swiss agreed, and marched westward under his command; Fort Douglas soon capitulated before a trained force of soldiers; and Selkirk once more entered into his own.

Those of the old colonists who still remained in the neighbourhood were assembled together in June 1817. 'The new parish,' said Selkirk, addressing them, 'shall be Kildonan. Here you shall build your church, and that lot'—pointing across the little stream since called Parsonage Creek—'is for a school.'[1]

A treaty was made with the redskins, who now discovered that the Scottish peer was not the terrible enemy that the agents of the North-West Company had painted him; and having proved to his people that 'Selkirk never forfeited his word,' the great pioneer of settlement in western Canada left Lake Winnipeg for Britain. Less than three years later, on 8th April 1820, he died, being not yet quite fifty years of age.

But Selkirk's work was done. The victory was won, and the pioneer colony of western Canada was securely established.

[1] In the churchyard at Kildonan, where many of the Selkirk settlers now sleep their last long sleep, one of the tombs bears the magnificent words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, 'For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.' No finer motto could have been adopted by any pioneer; but the preceding words of the Epistle would have been equally fitting: 'By faith, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling with the heirs with him of the same promise.'

It is true that the Swiss soldiers, who proved far from satisfactory settlers, deserted the settlement when a great flood of the Red River nearly overwhelmed the western plains in the winter of 1826. Their departure was not greatly regretted, nor did it diminish the strength of the colony. It is true also that the Scottish colonists had many hardships yet to endure, and that famine sometimes menaced the whole population. But in time they became 'good hunters; they could kill the buffalo, walk on snowshoes; they had trains of dogs trimmed with ribbons, bells, and feathers, in true Indian style: and in other respects they were making rapid strides in the arts of a savage life.' In a word, they became acclimatised to the new conditions.

Never again were they attacked by the North-West Company or the redskins: the right of the agriculturists who were already settled on the Red River to develop the agricultural resources of the Canadian West, was henceforth tacitly admitted. But it was also tacitly denied that any other settlers had the right to imitate their example in the territories controlled by the fur-traders.

The Selkirk settlers were the pioneers of the mighty stream of European immigration that was to populate the Canadian West. But for many years to come there was little further movement towards the prairies. Occasional small parties indeed arrived, and the population of the future province of Manitoba grew very slowly but fairly steadily; but no concerted movement was made to develop the country. The numerous emigrants from Britain to Canada mostly settled in Ontario, and such overflow as there was crossed the border into the United States; few indeed adventured the long and dangerous journey from Montreal to the Red River, or the hardly less exhausting march from the Hudson Bay to Lake Winnipeg.

Isolation of the Settlement, 1826-70.

The Selkirk settlers therefore remained isolated, the first shoot of a mighty tree that put forth no more branches for

half a century. The Hudson's Bay Company, which had united with the North-West Company in 1821, and thus ended a long competition that bade fair to ruin both corporations, still retained control of the country: and many of the descendants of Selkirk's pioneers took service in its employment. And the stores required for Fort Garry—for the city of Winnipeg did not yet exist—were still sent along the old traders' track from the forts on the Hudson Bay; neither rail, road, nor telegraph brought the people of Manitoba into communication with the outer world. So late as the year 1870, indeed, the nearest railway terminus was at Collingwood on the Georgian Bay—several hundred miles distant in Ontario; the nearest road stopped short at Lake Shebandowan. And when Lord Wolseley marched westwards to put down the Red River rising in the same year, he discovered that he had precisely the same means of transport at his disposal as the ancient Romans—sail, oar, horse, and foot.[1] Modern inventions did not exist west of Ontario.

But a change was at hand. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the dead hand of the fur-traders was removed from the country whose riches they had hidden; the Canadian West was invaded by the railway, the telegraph, and the steamer; and these brought in their track the multitudes of Europe, who sought a new home under new conditions in a virgin land.

The first settlement across the Rocky Mountains had already been made when the railway began to push forward westwards from Ontario towards Lake Winnipeg. But whereas the trading stations in the province that is now known as British Columbia were established by the trappers who came from eastern Canada as the eighteenth century neared its close, the first actual settlement in that vast expanse of streams and forests was made from the Pacific coast.

The British Columbian Pioneers.

[1] See Wolseley's *Story of a Soldier's Life*.

The discovery of gold along the western shores of America—the same gold which Drake had seen three centuries before, but which had been forgotten since that time—brought a rush of eager seekers after wealth. Twenty thousand persons are reported to have arrived on Vancouver Island alone during the year 1858, and the beginnings of a town were already seen on the mainland at the mouth of the Fraser River.

New Westminster, as the place was called, appeared to a young English clergyman, who landed there in 1860, as nothing more than 'a few huts, one small collection of wooden stores, some sheds and tents—perhaps a population of two hundred and fifty people in all.' The dense pine forests surrounded the little town, whose domestic arrangements were extremely primitive—one man, for instance, placed empty gin-bottles in holes in the walls as the best available substitute for windows. Yet this was none the less the future capital of a wealthy and prosperous community. From so small an acorn grows the oak.

But at New Westminster, as at the older settlement on the Red River, no great advance was made until the railroad bridged the continent from Atlantic to Pacific. The Canadian Pacific Railway was the first true overland route to the Canadian West.

Yet the West had called, and called not in vain, to Europe. The adventurer heard its summons; and mistaking its call for the promise of wealth in the tropic East, he sought an elusive passage through storm and snow and shipwreck, in high latitudes that led but to death and an unknown grave. The Call of the West.

The religious, too, had heard its summons; and armed only with the crucifix and the invisible armour of faith, missionaries from stately Catholic monastery and quiet Protestant parsonage sought in the western wilderness to obey the command of their Master to preach the gospel among all nations. These, too, laid down their lives in the quest for souls, as the

adventurer laid down his in the quest for wealth; but whereas the adventurer sought the gold of earth, the missionary promised his doubtful hearers the more precious gold of heaven.

The trader followed the adventurer, the statesman followed the missionary. To both again the call of the West appealed, and appealed not in vain. For the trader seldom returned for long to the more crowded haunts of man; the wide spaces and freedom of life in the West had ensnared his soul. And while the explorer followed the great streams that race down the western mountains into the Pacific, or find their way more slowly to the frozen bosom of the North, the statesman planned his empire, of Spain, of France, or of Britain, that was to control these vast rolling territories, and make them fruitful of new nations.

Another generation passed, and the call of the West was heard in the homes of Europe; and men and women set forth from the neat farms and busy towns of Britain, from the pine-bordered fiords of Norway and the great windswept plains of Russia, to found in the West the new nation of which Berkeley and Bryant had dreamed, and for whose coming Vérendrye and La Salle, Mackenzie and Fraser, and others of less renown, had sought out a path through the wilderness to the ends of the earth.

Book XI

THE BIRTH OF THE CANADIAN NATION: 1497-1867

CHAPTER I

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR: 1497-1910[1]

The New-Found-Land in the unknown West which to Tudor England marked the beginning of the new empire overseas, has long since lost its first importance. Happily for Britain, more attractive regions have been discovered for the development of her people than the fog-laden shores of Newfoundland and its bleak dependency of Labrador, both of which countries have jealously conserved their virgin independence from the neighbouring Dominion of Canada. Both are still known

[1] Authorities.—Hakluyt is essential for the earlier voyagers. Judge Prowse's *History of Newfoundland* is an exhaustive work, which practically supersedes the histories by Hatton and Harvey, and by Pedley; the latter, however, still possesses some value. I have not seen the official records of Newfoundland, which begin in the year 1749; they are said, however, to be of small interest. The various treaties referring to the Newfoundland fisheries are given in Prowse or in the British Foreign Office Treaty Series. *The Truth about Newfoundland*, by Beckles Willson, is a candid and lively description of the island and its politics, which flatters neither the colony nor Great Britain. For recent events, the correspondents of the London *Times* and *Globe* newspapers, whose letters are published from time to time in those journals, should be consulted.

For Labrador, Hind's *Explorations in Labrador*; Packard's *The Labrador Coast* (with a useful bibliography of the country); Cartwright's *Sixteen Years on the Coast of Labrador*; Dillon Wallace's *The Long Labrador Trail*; Mrs. Hubbard's *A Woman's Way through Unknown Labrador*; and Gosling's *Labrador*.

Anticosti is described in the volume of *Transactions of the Geographical Society of Quebec*, 1893-7.

chiefly for the fishing stations along their coasts, rather than for any settlement or industry on land. The history of Newfoundland is the history of her fisheries: her successes and her failures, her prosperity and her poverty, her politics and her importance in the world, are all calculated in terms of thousands of tons of cod.

From the first discovery of the island by Europeans the fisheries have been the controlling factor in its existence.

St. John's Day, 1497.

On 24th June 1497, John Cabot of Bristol first sighted the new western world. The exact spot at which he touched is unknown, although tradition points steadily to Cape Bonavista; but the day of discovery, the Christian festival of St. John the Baptist, still lives in the name of Newfoundland's capital.

Cabot returned to England; and within a few months of his landing, his report that a very great trade might be done in fish from the Newfoundland shores raised hopes of profit among the seamen of London and the western counties, who 'ran after him,' according to a letter of the day, 'like mad people'; while the belief that the voyage thither need not take more than a fortnight added to the eagerness of our mariners.

The first English fishing fleet arrived off Newfoundland in the following year, and the expectations excited by Cabot's promises were fully realised. Other nations soon followed, determined to share in England's fortune: the Portuguese appeared in 1501, the French in 1504. Each subsequent year the fleets came over with the spring east winds; a glance at the map indicates the havens in which they sheltered and stored their catch. English Harbour, Frenchman's Cove, Spaniard's Bay, Portugal and Biscayan Cove show the haunts of the different nations; Notre Dame Bay was evidently used by the French, while Torbay and Flambro' Head probably mark points visited by Devon and Yorkshire fishers, and named by

The Newfoundland Cod Fisheries.

them from some fancied likeness to their own coasts at home.

The island whose inexhaustible supply of codfish drew seamen from every port of western Europe to its shores is mentioned in the English records of the early sixteenth century variously as the New Isle, Newfounde Launde, and Newfounded Island. But although our vessels visited the place season by season, the older English codfishery off Iceland was not yet abandoned; and for many years the Basque and Breton sailors had more and larger ships engaged in the Newfoundland industry than the English. Our boats at first were not heavier than fifty tons—mere cockleshells, to cross the Atlantic in which required both courage and seamanship of no common order; but the danger was of little consequence to Devonian sailors, while the profits of a successful voyage were great.

In accordance with the old custom of the English fishing trade, the crew received one-third and the owners two-thirds of the catch; and a steady stream of wealth now began to pour into the Devon and Dorset ports from which these ventures were directed. In course of time Newfoundland was looked upon as in some sense a possession of the west of England shipping merchants; and the predominance of the west country in the main industry of the island is almost as important a feature of its subsequent history as the maritime wealth upon which its commercial existence has always depended.

In the year 1578, Richard Hakluyt remarked that of the four hundred vessels which appeared annually off Newfoundland, not more than thirty or fifty were English; but despite their numerical inferiority, the west-country sailors seem already to have established themselves as masters of the place. They were 'commonly lords of the harbour where they fished,' wrote a merchant sailor of Bristol to Hakluyt at that time; and another informed him that 'our English merchants

command all there.' England, in fact, already considered Newfoundland as her own; and no other nation seems to have disputed the claim.

But no attempt had yet been made to colonise the island, although a few huts had already been built along the shores and beside the harbours in which Newfoundland abounded, to shelter the crews while they dried the annual catch of codfish; and it is possible that a few sailors wintered there from time to time instead of returning to their homes. Nor were the methods adopted later in the Elizabethan age, when expeditions were fitted out to found a colony in Newfoundland, such as could lead to success. Sir Humphrey Gilbert's first venture in 1578 was designed, as he himself stated, to 'annoy the King of Spain by fitting out a fleet of ships of war under pretence of a voyage of discovery, and so fall upon the enemy's ships and destroy his trade in Newfoundland and the West Indies, and possess the country'; but the brave Devonshire knight had as yet no settled plan of colonisation. 'Commit us afterwards as pirates if you will,' he wrote, 'but I shall ruin their sea force.' He did not succeed even in that.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert's Experiment, 1578-83.

A disastrous failure crippled Gilbert's resources, but abated not his enthusiasm; five years later he fitted out another expedition with more definite aim. Two hundred and fifty men sailed with him in five small vessels; 'hobby horses and morris dancers, and many like conceits were provided to win the savage people by all fair means possible': plans were likewise made to establish a settlement which should prosper both Newfoundland and England.

Failure of the Settlements.

But again Gilbert had no success. One of his vessels turned pirate. Many of his men deserted. The English fishermen off Newfoundland opposed his intrusion into their domain; and although he 'took possession of the said land in the right of the Crown of England by digging up a turf

and receiving the same with a hazel wand delivered unto him after the manner of the law and custom of England'; although, too, he proclaimed the establishment of the Church of England and of himself as absolute governor, Gilbert was soon forced to abandon the island. 'The wings of a man's life,' he had said some years before, 'are plumed with the arrows of death'; and the chance remark now seemed almost a prophecy of his fate. On the voyage home his vessel, the *Golden Hind*, was caught in a storm, 'devoured and swallowed up of the sea'; and the unfortunate adventurer perished with his crew.[1]

So ended the first English experiment in colonisation. Gilbert's failure was the inevitable consequence of rash inexperience; and one of the few survivors of the expedition, undismayed by the catastrophe, still believed that 'fruit might grow in time of our travelling into these north-west lands.' But the tide of English overseas adventure had now turned to the warmer, richer countries of the south; the voyage to India and the foundation of Virginia distracted public attention from an island which was naturally associated with a disaster that had cost the nation dear, both in lives and money.

The west-country sailors were well satisfied with the course that events had taken. They were already masters in the Newfoundland seas. The destruction of the Spanish Armada strengthened their position for some years almost into a monopoly. And they had no desire to see intruders, whether English or foreign, on the soil of an island which a century's custom had taught them to regard as their own peculiar possession; nor had Gilbert's magisterial actions during his brief stay in Newfoundland done anything to reconcile them to outside interference. Henceforth the west-country fishing trade exerted an active and generally successful opposition to any schemes of settlement.

But interest in the colonisation of Newfoundland again

[1] See also vol. i. bk. i. ch. iii.

revived when in 1607 a project was drawn up for the establishment of a new plantation on the island by some of the old associates of Sir Humphrey Gilbert. The venture was strongly supported by Lord Bacon, who rightly declared that the Newfoundland fisheries were ' more valuable than all the mines of Peru ' ; and after some delay a charter was obtained from the king. Three years subsequently settlers were emigrated, a governor was appointed, and a chaplain undertook to furnish spiritual instruction ; horses, cattle, pigs and poultry were sent out, and the colony seemed at first to promise well.

But the proprietors were unable to maintain order among their people. Many of the settlers abandoned the place. The fishers did everything in their power to embarrass the unwelcome invaders ; and the promoters of the enterprise gradually wearied of the struggle, and sold part of their grant to other and still inexperienced adventurers.

Yet the wish to colonise remained strong in England ; and no fewer than five other ventures were inaugurated in Newfoundland alone during the reign of James I. Among these the most notable was a settlement at Avalon, in the south of the island, by Calvert, first Lord Baltimore, the future founder of Maryland in America. Again the enterprise seemed likely to succeed, for much money was spent by the proprietor and many emigrants went over ; but within a few years nothing of the scheme survived save the name. The planters were disgusted with the climate and the opposition they had to encounter, and most of them abandoned their estates ; while Baltimore himself, distracted by the internal dissensions and external interference, had already turned his attention elsewhere.

From that time the west-country fishing merchants were practically undisputed owners of Newfoundland. They were assiduous in discouraging any further attempts at colonisation, by spreading reports which exaggerated the bleak and desolate character of the island, by emphasising the poverty

of its soil and the severity of its climate, and by representing it as a land of misery from which the unwary visitor might think himself lucky if he escaped alive. They had hardly a good word to say for the place which was the source of their wealth; but they were careful to safeguard their possession by obtaining a monopoly of it from the king.

Colonisation opposed by the Fishing Trade.

West-country influence was strong at court, and no difficulty seems to have arisen over the grant of exclusive privileges in Newfoundland to the shipowners of Devon and the neighbouring counties. In the year 1633, for instance, an order was issued by Charles I., which was stated with unconscious humour to be for 'the well-governing of his subjects inhabiting Newfoundland, or trafficking in bays, creeks, or fresh rivers there'; and which in effect forbade intending emigrants to go there at all.

No shipowner trading to Newfoundland was allowed to carry any persons not of his company, or any who intended to plant or settle in the island; and by a further extraordinary provision, which showed still more clearly that the colony was to be reserved absolutely for the west of England, it was provided that any complaints of offences committed in Newfoundland were to be reported to the mayors of Southampton, Weymouth, Melcombe Regis, Lynn, Plymouth, Dartmouth, Foye,[1] or Barnstaple. It may be imagined what chance of justice there would be for a settler on the island when his case was heard on the other side of the Atlantic by the officials of a seaport which considered his very presence in Newfoundland inimical to its interests.

Four years later an additional order was given, which still further curtailed the rights of those persons who had gone to Newfoundland with another object than that of engaging in the fisheries. No settler was now allowed to dwell within

[1] The charming little Cornish seaport which now spells itself Fowey but continues to pronounce its name as Foye.

six miles of the shore; and another regulation by Charles II., forty years subsequently, in 1675, not only reinforced his father's order, but added other stringent rules against the introduction of settlers.

The repetition of the order proves that it had been ineffective. The English executive had always been weak at home, and it was especially weak during the political troubles of the seventeenth century; in Newfoundland the Government hardly possessed any authority at all. And though the fishing merchants had done their utmost to prevent the occupation of the island, they had only partially succeeded in their aim.

Their opposition had probably, indeed, hindered very many intending settlers from coming over. But some few planters had remained in Newfoundland when the unfortunate enterprises in the time of James I. had failed. Year by year some sailors had deserted their ships and made their homes in the interior. And occasional landsmen from England had found their way across the Atlantic, and established themselves in Newfoundland, in spite of the law which forbade them the island.

Poverty and Lawlessness of Newfoundland.

The political institutions of the colony were as rudimentary as its economic condition was poor. Its settlers were not of the best class, for they were often men who had fled from justice in England to a place where the law did not reach, or seamen who had abandoned their ships, and who dared not therefore show their faces on the coast. They were poor, for they had few means of selling their produce within the island, and none at all without; even the better class of farmer was hampered by the opposition of the fishing trade. They had little sense of corporate union, for they lived in small, scattered and isolated communities. They had no governor, for the west-country merchants had always protested against the appointment of one; such government as Newfoundland possessed

was carried on by fishing admirals—the captain of the first fishing vessel which entered a harbour at the beginning of the fishing season was the governor of the surrounding district for the time being.

It is true that much wealth was derived from the inexhaustible fisheries of Newfoundland. But the island gained little from its one great industry; for the proprietors of the fishing vessels lived in England, and the profits of their voyages were spent at home and not in the colony. The little seaports which lie scattered along the Devon and Cornish coasts in picturesque confusion wherever a river melts into the sea, grew rich and prosperous from the proceeds of Newfoundland cod; while St. John's, the capital of the colony, remained a straggling collection of houses, without school, church, newspaper, or governor.

The French Invasion, 1662-1713.

But if the west-countrymen still did their utmost to hinder the settlement of Englishmen in Newfoundland, they were unable to prevent other nations from obtaining a share in its fisheries. The power of France was steadily growing in America, and ambitious statesmen at Paris were already planning an empire in the West which should overshadow the English colonies. Envious eyes were cast on Newfoundland, whose chief industry was both a source of wealth in itself and of great national value as a training-ground for seamen; and in 1662 the French suddenly occupied Placentia Bay. There is some reason to believe that their action was not undertaken without the connivance of Charles II., that merry monarch who sold the interests of his country with a light heart; but whatever ground there may be for the suspicion, a new and potent cause of trouble was now introduced into the affairs of Newfoundland.

The French had chosen their position wisely. In time of war the fort which was erected in Placentia Bay proved impregnable; in time of peace the port might have become

a great trading and fishing centre. And instead of imitating the restrictive policy of the English in the island, the French at once encouraged settlement: a royal proclamation promised shipmasters a reward of five livres for every man and three livres for every woman carried to Placentia, while the English residents on the island were offered one, and afterwards three, years' free residence if they would desert the British part of the island and make their homes in the French quarter.

But despite these inducements the French colony prospered even less than the English. No Frenchman had ever wintered on the island before the annexation of Placentia; few cared to do so now. That ineradicable love of the homeland which is at once the strength of France and the weakness of her colonies was felt as much by the wandering Norman and Breton fishers who were building up her sea-power in the West as by the more sedentary citizens of Paris and Lyons; and the permanent population of Placentia at no time reached two hundred.

Other causes likewise combined to retard the settlement. The government of the place was tyrannical and not always honest; and their English neighbours waged bitter and unceasing war upon the French. No international treaties of peace were recognised in the feud between the planters and the fishermen on either side: English buccaneers raided Placentia time and again, and on each occasion stripped the people of their goods; English sailors attacked the French fishers, and confiscated or destroyed their catch whenever possible; the French in their turn retaliated with vigour, and often laid the English settlements in ruins.

The geographical position of Newfoundland, in fact, rendered it inevitably the maritime centre of the great struggle between France and Britain for the possession of North America. Both nations strove to possess the island; and the English now discovered the folly of the old policy

which had discouraged settlement and sacrificed everything to the interests of the west-country fishers. Several of the English planters had been enticed away by the inducements which the French had offered, and very many more had abandoned Newfoundland for New England, where they found, reported a naval captain of the day, that 'with a settled government and fortified harbours they avoided the abuses of the ungoverned seamen, who dealt with them as they pleased. In New England they were preserved from sea rovers and enemies, had a minister to christen, instruct, marry and bury them; and equal justice, which greatly encouraged all except those who desired to live under no government.'

But although the English settlers were no longer opposed by their own government, it was too late to save the island. A strong force of French soldiers and American redskins invaded Newfoundland from Canada in 1696; St. John's was attacked, captured, and destroyed; other small townships suffered a similar fate, and within a few weeks the whole island was practically under French rule.

Newfoundland conquered by France, 1696.

A storm of anger arose in England when the loss of Newfoundland became known; and the indignation was not lessened when the terrible cruelties which the redskins had perpetrated upon the settlers were made public. St. John's was soon recaptured; but the British Government, fully occupied with the fight against France in Europe, were unable to drive the French out of the remote island in the western Atlantic. The guerilla warfare continued in Newfoundland as it did in North America; St. John's was lost and regained a second time in 1708; but neither nation could expel the other.

Each, however, could, and did, damage its rival's trade; and the statistics of the Newfoundland fisheries show what enormous damage was inflicted during the struggle. The

number of English fishing ships visiting the island declined from 171 in the year 1700 to 20 in 1705; the boats from 800 to 60; and the boats belonging to the inhabitants of Newfoundland from 764 to 200.

Expulsion of the French, 1713.

The general Peace of Utrecht, concluded in 1713, brought the strife to a close by ceding Newfoundland and the small neighbouring islands to Britain. Placentia was ordered to be vacated at once; and a clause in the treaty declared that neither the King of France, nor 'his heirs and successors, or any of their subjects (should) at any time hereafter lay claim to any right to the said island or islands, or to any part of it or them.' The clause was meaningless, for the stipulation was superfluous if the power of France remained crippled; while if that power again increased—as in fact it did—the most solemn pledge would possess no more value than the paper on which it was written. The government did not yet exist which could place the ungrateful altruism of international morality before the immediate benefits of national advantage.

The 'French Shore,' 1713-1904.

But Newfoundland was now confronted by a difficulty which was destined to colour her subsequent history as deeply with the sombre hues of misfortune as the late opposition to the colonisation of the island by the fishing merchants had shackled her progress in the past. The fatal weakness of the English negotiators at Utrecht, careless or perhaps ignorant of the oversea interests of their country, led them to make concessions which left a running sore for nearly two centuries in the life of the colony. The British were, indeed, declared the sole owners of Newfoundland. But the French were still allowed the right of catching and drying their fish along a considerable length of the coast[1]; and it required no prophetic powers to foretell

[1] Extract from Article XIII. of the Treaty of Utrecht:—'It shall not be lawful for the subjects of France to fortify any place in the said island of Newfoundland, or to erect any buildings there, besides stages made of boards, and huts necessary and useful for drying of fish, or to resort

that their claims to what in course of time naturally became known as the 'French shore' would grow more definite and extensive whenever the international situation offered a favourable opportunity.

The colony escaped the brunt of the Seven Years' War, although St. John's—whose garrison had been reduced to the absurdly small number of sixty-three men, and whose forts were antiquated and decayed—was taken by surprise in 1762. The French, however, were soon dislodged; but at the Peace of Paris a few months later, the British diplomatists again disregarded the interests of Newfoundland. France had been everywhere defeated by England, and the French Empire in America was now destroyed; yet the obnoxious clause in the treaty of 1713 which recognised the 'French shore,' was suffered to remain in 1763; and in addition the two small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, to the south of Newfoundland, were ceded to France, as if to perpetuate those dreams of dominion in the new world whose substance had already been shattered by the pitiless logic of fact.

The concession did not satisfy the French; it exasperated the English. Angry appeals and protests against it were made by the commercial interests of England, but without effect. Even Pitt raised his voice in vain: 'I contended several times for the whole exclusive fishery, but I was overruled,' he cried in Parliament; 'I repeat, I was overruled, not by the foreign enemy, but by another enemy.' The great orator referred to the premier, the Earl of Bute, who had deserted the Prussian ally of Britain, and

to the said island beyond the time necessary for fishing and drying of fish. But it shall be allowed to the subjects of France to catch fish and to dry them on land in that part only, and in no other besides that, of the said island of Newfoundland, which stretches from the place called Cape Bonavista to the northern part of the said island, and from thence running down by the western side, reaches as far as the place called Point Riche.' The author of *Tristram Shandy* remarked that the Peace of Utrecht had broken Uncle Toby's heart; this clause might well have broken the hearts of the Newfoundlanders.

forfeited part of the legitimate fruits of victory, in his desire for peace; others bluntly accused the unpopular Bute of being in the pay of France.

Twenty years later, in 1783, a third treaty was signed at Versailles on the conclusion of the Imperial Civil War, and once more Newfoundland was condemned to be the Cinderella of the empire. The clauses in the two previous treaties relating to the French fisheries off the colony were again agreed to; but the 'French shore,' instead of reaching from Cape Bonavista to Cape John, was now declared to stretch northwards from Cape John and south-westwards to Cape Ray. And a further declaration stated that 'in order that the fishermen of the two nations may not give cause for daily quarrels, His Britannic Majesty will take the most positive measures for preventing his subjects from interfering in any manner by their competition, with the fishery of the French during the temporary exercise of it, which is granted to them upon the coasts of Newfoundland; and he will for this purpose cause the fixed settlements which shall be formed there to be removed. His Britannic Majesty will give orders that the French fishermen be not incommoded in cutting the wood necessary for repairs of their scaffolds, huts, and fishing vessels.'

The third treaty thus completed the miserable work of its predecessors. By the first the French had gained the right to land and ply their business in Newfoundland. By the second they had not merely maintained that right, but had in addition secured territory near the island. By the third they had further acquired the exclusive right to all the western and half the eastern shores of what still remained a British colony. No more disastrous series of concessions was ever consented to by a great colonising nation; and the three treaties together furnish an almost incredible instance of the stupendous folly of British diplomacy, for these concessions were not made after a series of such defeats on sea and land

as would alone have justified them, but after the French had in each case been defeated in the course of long and arduous wars.

The English colony in Newfoundland rightly felt aggrieved that its interests had been sacrificed by the imperial authorities. The French claimed their full, perhaps more than their full treaty rights; the British Government proved complaisant: and the monstrous yet inevitable result was that half the shores of a British colony were permanently closed against British enterprise.

But Newfoundland had not yet experienced the full lengths to which the British Government would go in neglecting the interests of the colony. The island suffered little during the great Napoleonic wars, for the one French invasion which took place in 1796 failed completely; but at the Peace of 1814 the petition of the Newfoundlanders, that foreign traders might be excluded altogether from the Newfoundland fisheries, was disregarded, and the old concessions to France were again agreed to.

Thus was a fourth opportunity lost; and a fifth occasion of offence was given when a convention was concluded in 1818 with the United States of America. The convention provided that 'the inhabitants of the United States should have for ever, in common with the subjects of His Britannic Majesty, the liberty to take fish of every kind on the part of the southern coast of Newfoundland extending from Cape Ray to the Rameau Islands; on the western and northern coast, from Cape Ray to the Quirpon Islands; on the shores of the Magdalen Islands, and also on the coasts, bays, harbours, and creeks, from Mount Joli on the southern coast of Labrador to and through the Straits of Belleisle; and thence northwardly, indefinitely along the coast, without prejudice, however, to any of the exclusive rights of the Hudson's Bay Company'; and 'that the American fishermen should also have liberty for ever to dry and cure fish in any of the unsettled bays, harbours, and

The American Convention, 1818.

creeks of the southern part of the coast of Newfoundland above described, and of the coast of Labrador; but so soon as the same, or any portion thereof, should be settled, it was not to be lawful . . . without previous agreement . . . with the inhabitants.' These concessions were another legacy of trouble for the unfortunate islanders.

Though its interests were thus betrayed again and again, at first to English traders and afterwards to foreign nations, the colony was helpless. Its inhabitants had no voice in imperial affairs; until the nineteenth century they had no voice even in their own affairs. The English fishing merchants were strong enough to prevent the appointment of a governor until 1729. The same merchants combined to oppose the establishment of law courts; not until 1791 was a court of civil jurisdiction created in Newfoundland.[1] And when an agitation sprang up to obtain for the island the same rights of representative government which were being granted to other and more recently founded colonies, it was again the English fishing merchants who led the opposition. They had no interest in the progress of Newfoundland, for they either lived in England or retired thither after a few years spent in St. John's; their profits were handsome under the old system, and they distrusted any change.

Yet despite the conservatism of those who fattened on the colony and delayed its advance, some slow progress was made during the course of years. The population gradually increased from the miserable total of 15,484 in 1765 to 217,037 in 1901. The fisheries were extended; and some additional agricultural estates were planted inland, it being at length officially discovered

Gradual Progress in Newfoundland.

[1] One Chief Justice of Newfoundland replied to a complaint as to a decision in the following simple but forcible terms: 'To the first charge Your Excellency I answer that it is a lie, to the second charge I say that it is a damned lie, and to the third charge that it is a damned infernal lie, and Your Excellency I have no more to say. Your Excellency's old servant, Thomas Tremlett.' There is a clarity about this statement that is lacking from the considered judgments of many of our greater lawyers.

that 'it was a circumstance particularly favourable to agriculture that husbandry did not interfere with the fisheries, and that the fisheries supplied the farmer with manure. The land might be prepared, and the crops put in and taken out, before the commencement of, and after the fishery was over.'[1] The demand to possess land was now 'eager and general.' And many of the ships required for the fishing trade were likewise built in Newfoundland itself; other dependent industries were also founded. A postal system was introduced in 1805; a newspaper was founded in the following year. A few schools were started; and after the year 1765, when the first Wesleyan missionary arrived on the island, the people were not without religious instruction. The Church of England still delayed awhile; but when the first Bishop of Newfoundland was appointed in 1839, its activities soon extended from the island to its continental dependency of Labrador.[2]

But every step that Newfoundland advanced only quickened the demand for parliamentary government; yet when a constitution was at length granted in 1832, the year of the great English Reform Bill, it was quickly found to be unworkable. Part of the fault rested with the constitution itself; for the Legislative Council, which was intended to correspond as far as possible with the House of Lords in the British system, consisted solely of officials nominated by the governor of the island; and the parallel example of the Canadian constitution[3] had shown that this method of appointing the Upper

The Newfoundland Constitution, 1832.

[1] Letter of Governor of Newfoundland to Lord Bathurst, quoted by Prowse.

[2] The clergy did not arrive before it was high time; and they sometimes found the right of private judgment exercised in distressingly open fashion. One parson reported that he was asked to officiate at an incestuous marriage; when he refused, the man went home with his bride, ordered his servant to read the service, and consummated the marriage. I have never been able to decide to my own satisfaction whether the impatient bridegroom had too much or too little respect for the ceremony.

[3] See ch. iv. of this book.

House produced immediate and prolonged friction with the Lower, or House of Assembly.

Much of the responsibility for the failure of the constitution, however, must be assigned to the social conditions which had grown up in Newfoundland during three centuries of administrative neglect and internal lawlessness. The wealthy fishing merchants had opposed the agitation for parliamentary government; they now supported the nominated Legislative Council in its struggle with the popularly elected House; and the members of the latter were not indisposed to pick a quarrel with their opponents.

Disorderly mobs provoked riots and even bloodshed at election times: religious feeling, too, had always run high in the island; and sectarian controversies now added to the bitterness of political strife. Neither fishermen nor farmers are wont to restrain the force of their expressions of opinion; and the Newfoundland Parliament proved a mirror of the popular mind in the strength of its language if in nothing else. 'I know not,' remarked the Attorney-General suavely on one occasion, 'with what weapon the honourable member will attack me, except it be with the jaw-bone of an ass.'[1]

The petty details of provincial bickerings may well be left in the obscurity of provincial newspapers; but within a few years an appeal was made to the British Privy Council to determine the disputed extent of the powers of the Newfoundland House of Assembly. The decision, given on 11th January 1841, brought little comfort to the extreme advocates of popular rights. 'The House of Assembly of Newfoundland,' stated the supreme legislative authority of the empire, 'is a local legislature with every power reasonably necessary for the proper exercise of their functions and duties; but they

[1] The first Newfoundland Parliament was popularly known in England as the Bow-Wow Parliament, in allusion to the famous dogs of the island. A caricature of the period represents the Newfoundland Speaker putting a motion in the words, 'As many as are of that opinion, say Bow; of the contrary, Wow: the Bows have it.'

have not, as they erroneously suppose themselves to possess, the same exclusive privileges which the ancient law of England has annexed to the House of Parliament.'

Two months later the constitution was suspended for a time, in consequence of a serious election riot; but when it was subsequently restored there was no sign of any improvement. Vituperation and scurrility continued to mark the debates; the rising press of the colony echoed the tones of its parliament: tumult and lawlessness were still the inevitable accompaniments of an election.

In 1855 the representative system of the original constitution was changed for responsible self-government. But more liberal institutions brought no improvement in the tone of political life. Party feeling ran so high that when the British Government in 1887 appointed a native of Newfoundland to be governor of the island—a rare compliment to its people—he was attacked by his political opponents with such bitterness that he was forced to resign his position; and even so late as April 1909, Sir Robert Bond, an ex-premier of Newfoundland, was thrown into the sea by an excited crowd during an election quarrel.

It is not in such miserable episodes that the true progress of a country is traced: but it is probable that, had political feeling in Newfoundland been less divided and less acrimonious, or had the people been willing to enter the federation formed by the Canadian provinces in 1867,[1] more attention would have been given to their affairs by the Imperial Government. As it was, they remained isolated and relatively unimportant: the interests of the colony, which in Lord Salisbury's phrase were 'the sport of historic misfortune,' were always sacrificed to French and American claims; and despite the promise given by the British Government on 26th March 1857, that no decisions relating to Newfoundland should be arrived at

[1] For the negotiations relating to the inclusion of Newfoundland in the Dominion of Canada see ch. v. of this book.

without the previous knowledge and consent of the legislature of the island, nothing definite was done to protect the colony from foreign competition on its own shores.

French and American sailors continued to catch their fish off the Newfoundland coasts: but the people of Newfoundland itself were prevented by prohibitive tariffs from selling their fish in France and the United States.[1] They were prevented from settling along the 'French shore'; they were forbidden for many years to open a railway there, or to conduct mining operations, on the ground that it might impede the French in their legitimate treaty rights. The inevitable consequence was that at the close of the nineteenth century there was not an English town, hardly even an English village, on the western side of an island that had been a British possession for four centuries.

The Fisheries Disputes settled, 1904-10.

The scandal was diminished by the Anglo-French Convention of 1904, under which France agreed to renounce the exclusive fishing rights which she enjoyed by a provision of the Treaty of Utrecht; but she retained the right to fish in the waters between the St. John's Cape and Cape Ray.

The United States were more tenacious of their treaty rights; and for some time nothing but a *modus vivendi*, which in itself was a confession of failure, could be arranged with the authorities at Washington by the British Government. By an agreement signed between the two powers on 27th January 1909, however, the whole matter was referred to the Arbitration Court at The Hague[2]; and on 7th September of the following year the award was given.

[1] The Newfoundlanders attempted to retaliate on the foreigners by forbidding the sale of bait to French and American fishermen. A Bait Act was passed in 1886, but the fishermen still sold bait to their rivals, notwithstanding attempts to persuade them that they were killing their own trade. One political placard of the time announced that 'The Fisherman who would sell Bait to a Frenchman would steal the pennies off his dead mother's eyes.' But the dreadful taunt was ineffectual, although the Bait Act caused grave inconvenience to the foreign fishermen.

[2] Foreign Office Treaty Series, No. 21 (1909).

Most of the points in dispute were decided in favour of Newfoundland.[1]

Internal dissensions and external disputes had too long been a chronic sore in the island; but while the latter were amicably settled in the early years of the twentieth century, there were many other signs of improvement during the same period.

It is true that Newfoundland developed slowly. Some roads had, indeed, been built, but they were few and unimportant; the interior of Newfoundland had hitherto remained almost unknown and entirely undeveloped. The first railway was not opened until 1882, and its construction was opposed both by the merchants and the fishermen; the agricultural resources of the country had been untouched, and its undoubted mineral wealth left unused.

Internal Development of Newfoundland.

But the scope of industry gradually widened; and although the fisheries—which employed 62,674 men in 1901—still remained the staple occupation of the community, they were no longer the sole source of wealth. The submarine cable stations which had been erected in Trinity Bay furnished some employment. The extensive forests of the island, which supplied the wood pulp that was largely used in the paper factories of Europe and America, provided much work.[2] Mining operations occupied 1576, and farming 2475 men in 1901; and when it was discovered that the climate of the interior was bright and the soil was fertile, several attempts were made to extend the agricultural industry of the colony by attracting settlers from Britain to take up undeveloped land at cheap rates.[3]

These new enterprises gave promise of a better future for

[1] The full award, which is somewhat lengthy and complicated, was printed in the London *Times* on 8th September 1910.

[2] Some excellent articles on the Newfoundland forests were contributed to the London *Daily Mail* for November 1909 by my friend W. Beach Thomas, the author of the charming essays entitled *From a Hertfordshire Garden*.

[3] See the advertisements published by the Newfoundland Government in the London *Standard* in 1909.

Newfoundland, but they had hardly reached beyond the initial stage during the first decade of the twentieth century : and the colony was still heavily handicapped by its continued refusal to federate with the Dominion of Canada.

Labrador, 1763.

To the geographer the island of Newfoundland is a dependency of that part of the North American mainland which is called Labrador ; to the politician, who notes that the course of human events will often reverse the processes of Nature, Labrador is itself in part a dependency of Newfoundland. The history of that bare and desolate country lives dimly among the misty traditions of old explorers ; the Scandinavian vikings, in their early voyages across the Atlantic, may have touched on that inhospitable coast which, in the words of a later traveller, is ' a vast solitude of rocky hills, split and blasted by rocks, and beaten by waves.' But if the northmen indeed reached a land so bare and sterile, they stayed not long on its forbidding shores ; and the first modern knowledge of Labrador is of English origin.

The Cabots discovered the mainland in their second westward voyage in 1498 ; the Latins followed two years later, when Gaspar Cortoreal, one of the most noted Portuguese mariners of the day, seems to have reached Newfoundland and Labrador. His opinion of the place is sufficiently shown by the remark that ' it ought to be the country which God gave to Cain ' ; yet the Basque and Breton sailors, who soon arrived to fish in Newfoundland waters, appear to have established a few scattered and precarious fishing-stations in Labrador.

But no permanent settlements were made in a country whose sole wealth lay off its shores ; the Europeans abandoned the coasts each year at the approach of winter, and left the interior to the Eskimos and the redskins undisturbed.[1]

[1] There have been traditions of a permanent French settlement in Bradore Bay, and even of a prosperous town having existed there ; but

Labrador was now vaguely reckoned as a province of New France; but when the French Empire in America fell, it passed in 1763 with the other Gallic colonies to Britain. A monopoly of the fisheries for sixty years was given to a commercial company in Quebec, but the work of administration was entrusted to Newfoundland. In 1773, however, Labrador was restored to Quebec, in consequence of difficulties that had arisen owing to Canadian claims on the district; but in 1809 the eastern part of the territory was again, and this time finally, annexed to Newfoundland.

In 1577 the English mariner, Martin Frobisher, had been disgusted with a country where he encountered 'the most boisterous boreal blasts mixt with snow and hail in the months of June and July, in place of odoriferous and fragrant smells of sweet gums and pleasant notes of musical birds which other countries in more temperate zones do yield,' and where ice, moreover, was 'a continual bulwark,' and thick fogs abounded: but two centuries later a few European settlers made their homes in Labrador. The Moravian missionaries arrived in 1770 to convert the Eskimos to Christianity, and their work was attended with complete success; while some occasional sailors, attracted by the wild life and the wealth of fish and birds and seals which offered a subsistence, took native women for their wives, and lived on from year to year in rough content. A mission of the Church of England was established among them in 1848 by the Bishop of Newfoundland; the total resident population of the place, however, was in 1891 not more than 4126, of whom 2719 were English.

Despite the difficult nature of the country, several modern explorers have penetrated the interior of Labrador; but they have found little to prove that the views of the older travellers were incorrect. The whole vast mass of land, which covers

an excellent article on Labrador in Stanford's *North America* proves this to be a myth. The word Labrador is the Portuguese for labourer; the reason for its application is uncertain.

over four hundred thousand square miles, appears to belong to a previous geological age; an Arctic climate and a sterile soil render the territory useless and uninhabitable.

Anticosti, 1763.

The island of Anticosti, lying midway in the St. Lawrence before Quebec, has been called the advanced sentinel of Canada; but never yet did sentinel present a more forbidding front to foe and friend alike than this. Its coasts are dangerous and desolate: the many shipwrecks that have taken place along its shores have made the place abhorred by sailors; the failure which has attended any attempt to cultivate the interior has given it an evil reputation among landsmen. Although discovered as long ago as the year 1534 by Jacques Cartier, Anticosti[1] has never attracted a permanent resident population; a few lighthouse-keepers and migratory fishermen alone occupy its sad and solitary shores, past which hurry the waters of the great river that conducts thousands of men, as the pulses of the human body conduct the blood, to the heart of British America.

CHAPTER II

THE MARITIME PROVINCES: 1621-1867[2]

The maritime wealth which gave Newfoundland its value in the eyes of Europe extended in part also to the neighbour-

[1] Cartier is said to have called the island Assomption; but the native name, which signifies 'the hunting-ground of the bear,' soon displaced that given by the French explorer.

[2] Authorities.—Murdoch's *History of Nova Scotia* gives the fullest account of the peninsula; Haliburton's *History* is well known, but it is out of date and contains many small inaccuracies. Of great value are the *Transactions of the Nova Scotia Historical Society*, from which I have frequently quoted; the publication by them of old diaries and papers have elucidated many obscure points. It would be an excellent thing if similar societies existed in every province of the empire. Akin's *Selections from the Public Documents of Nova Scotia* are often useful. Reference may also be made to the *Present State of Nova*

ing coasts of the mainland, which were only less advantageous than the island as centres of the profitable fishing trade, and of even more importance as affording a strategic foothold from which the settlement and conquest of the new world might be based. Nowhere was the struggle for possession between France and England more severe and more embittered than in the lands which are now the seaboard provinces of eastern Canada and the gateway of the British dominions in America; and the pitiful story of Acadia or Nova Scotia, which was captured and lost in turn by both nations during an almost incessant warfare of a century and a half, is one that has rarely been paralleled in the annals of the world's empires.

The early history of Acadia is extremely obscure. It is probable that some part of what is now known as Nova Scotia was discovered by the early Scandinavian mariners, who sailed south-westwards from their haunts in Greenland about the tenth century. It is possible that Cabot touched

Scotia (1787), Marsden's *Narrative of a Mission* (1827), Debbing's *Report on Halifax* (1796), Churchill's *Memorials of Mission Life* (1845). A record of the abortive Scottish experiment of Sir William Alexander will be found in the portly *Register of Royal Letters to the Earl of Stirling*; the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755 is described by Parkman in *Montcalm and Wolfe*; there are also many papers on the subject in the *Transactions of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* abovementioned, and one published by the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.

Bourinot's *Cape Breton* and Brown's *History of Cape Breton* are the best works on that island; the latter is written in the awkward form of letters to young men, but is full and accurate. For Prince Edward Island, Duncan Campbell's *History*; a reprint of *Public Documents* (1841); Macdonald, *Confederation Movement in Prince Edward Island.* For the Scottish settlers in the island, see Selkirk's *Observations on the Present State of the Highlands of Scotland* (1805).

For New Brunswick, Cooney's *Compendious History*, Martin's *History*, and Gesner's *New Brunswick*; also Fenety's *Political Notes and Observations* (1867, incomplete). To these may be added West's *Journal of a Mission* (1827) and Harper's *Maritime Provinces* (1882). There is a sketch of New Brunswick University in Hopkins's *Canada.* The publications of the New Brunswick Historical Society are of great value.

An interesting book, entitled *Farm-Cottage, Camp, and Canoe in Maritime Canada*, by A. P. Silver, gives much information on modern social life in these provinces.

on the American continent at some point here after his voyage to Newfoundland. It is certain that Jacques Cartier knew the northern shores of what are now Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick when he sailed up the St. Lawrence in 1535. And the fishermen of western Europe, who now began to visit Newfoundland regularly, were soon acquainted with Cape Breton Island and the neighbouring peninsula. They resorted thither every summer; it is not unlikely that they were occasionally forced to winter there. No attempt, indeed, was made as yet, or for many years subsequently, to found a colony; but at Cape Breton, as in Newfoundland, each nation possessed its own sphere of operations. The headquarters of the French were at St. Anne's Bay. The harbour where the great fortress of Louisbourg rose two centuries later was known as the Havre des Anglais, the English haven. And the arm of the sea on which Sydney, the modern English capital of Cape Breton, stands, still preserves the memory of its earliest European visitors in the name of Spanish Bay.

The outburst of colonising energy which characterised the close of the sixteenth century in Europe produced a scheme of settlement for Acadia as for Newfoundland and Virginia. In the year 1598 the Marquis de la Roche, who had received a patent from his sovereign, the King of France, landed a party of forty convicts from the French prisons on the barren Isle de Sable, and then proceeded on his way to explore the coast of the peninsula. Unfavourable weather presently compelled his return to Europe; but the convicts were left on their island, the helpless and unwilling pioneers of New France in Acadia.

France and Acadia, 1598.

Fortunately for them, a French ship was soon driven upon their shores: from its timbers they built rude huts against the winter, and a few sheep that were rescued from the wreck were eagerly devoured. For the rest they lived on fish and clothed themselves in sealskins for seven years, after which time not more than twelve of their number survived. Their

fate had meanwhile become known to the King of France; and by his orders they were now brought back to Europe, where they received a free pardon and fifty crowns apiece as some recompense for their sufferings.

A second French expedition arrived on the peninsula in 1604; and since that year Acadia has never been entirely destitute of European inhabitants. Among the party was the great pioneer, Samuel Champlain, the true founder of Canada; and he and his companions established themselves on a sheltered arm of the Bay of Fundy, while from their settlement here they explored the interior of the peninsula. Port Royal was the name chosen for their headquarters; and the place, which is now known as Annapolis, remained the capital city of the French in Acadia until their final defeat by the British in 1710.

The colony prospered. But its establishment had already aroused the jealousy of the English settlers in Virginia; and in the year 1613 the French in Acadia were attacked by the Virginians on the pretext that they were trespassing on English territory, and thereby infringing the charter of the Virginia Company. The plea was monstrous and absurd. The two nations were at peace. The French had nothing to do with the terms of a charter granted by an English king to an English company—a charter which the same king abrogated eleven years later. And the French had provoked no attack, for they had lived peaceably in a virgin land to which no English claim had ever before been made.

But their settlement was practically ruined; and its ruin was the first episode in the long strife between England and France for the possession of Acadia, and finally for the whole of North America. The English in Virginia did not, indeed, make good their claim to the country by planting there a garrison of settlers; they had enough to do to maintain their own weak and struggling establishment on the James River. The untenable theory that Acadia was part of Virginia was

silently dropped; and within a decade another infringement of the supposed rights of the Virginia Company was committed by an enterprising Scot with the express sanction and encouragement of the King of England.

Britain and Nova Scotia, 1621-32.

The earliest definite attempt to found a British settlement in Acadia was made in the year 1621, by Sir William Alexander, the future Earl of Stirling. This extraordinary man, of whom it was said by an enemy that he was born a poet and aimed to be a king, was the most able and energetic Scot of his age—a statesman whose schemes, had they been as successful in execution as they were great in conception, would have won immortal renown. Something of the lively versatility of Elizabethan England seemed to flow in his veins; he was at once a writer, a politician, and a man of business. As a poet, he was the author of *Doomesday*—a prophetic epic of stupendous length, which, although praised by Addison, will probably find no further readers until the dread events of which it treats have become historic. As a politician, Alexander was for several years an excellent Secretary of State for Scotland; the diligence which he displayed in the discharge of his duties is witnessed by two bulky volumes of official correspondence, while the scanty leisure of his idler hours was occupied by a metrical paraphrase of the Psalms, and with a project for the foundation of seaports on the west coast of Scotland. The secular employment proved of greater ultimate value than the religious verses; but it has been the unhappy fate of Alexander to have his successes forgotten and his failures remembered. Few of his countrymen recognise how greatly Scotland is indebted to him; all have heard of Nova Scotia, whose name derives from the first royal British charter to its soil, granted by James I. to Sir William Alexander on 29th September 1621.

No difficulty whatever was encountered by Alexander in obtaining the charter from his sovereign. The two great

conditions which determined the favours of the king were that his gifts should cost nothing and that the recipient should be a favourite; the grant of Nova Scotia to Alexander fulfilled both conditions.

'No kind of conquest,' wrote James I. to the Scottish Privy Council, 'can be more easie and innocent than that which doth proceed from plantationes, specially in a country commodious for men to live in, yet remaining altogether desert, or at least only inhabited by infidels, the conversion of whom to the Christian faith might tend much to the glory of God'; and the original grant was much extended a few years later when Charles I. gave Alexander authority to use 'mines and forests, appoint fairs, hold courts, grant lands, and coin money' within the yet uncertain limits of his possessions in America.

Alexander was authorised to raise funds for his colonial experiment by the creation of an order of baronets of Nova Scotia, whose duties and privileges were both specified with curious exactness. Each baronet was to hold jurisdiction over a tract of land extending three miles along the coast of Nova Scotia, and ten miles into the interior, receiving in all 16,000 acres. In return, he was to fit out six men for the colony, or to pay 6000 marks into its treasury. And by a provision as extraordinary as it was ridiculous, this embryo aristocracy of America were allowed to take formal possession of their estates in Nova Scotia on Castle Hill at Edinburgh, the whole of Alexander's patent in the new world being considered, by a daring interference with the recognised laws of geography, to lie within the limits of the county of Edinburgh in Scotland.

It does not appear that any of the order ever visited their territories in person; and the uncertain honour of becoming a baronet of Nova Scotia, or of New Galloway—as Cape Breton was now called—tempted few of Alexander's countrymen. And the conditions of settlement upon which he

determined, attracted but few emigrants. Only those who purchased lands were to possess any rights in the soil; the farmers, upon whom the life and prosperity of the colony must depend, could only obtain leases, and the artisans free holdings, during their lives. As a result, but one artisan and one Presbyterian minister sailed with the first expedition, which left Scotland in June 1622; unhappily, both died on the voyage. The remainder were ignorant Scottish labourers. With such an equipment disaster was inevitable.

Misfortunes pursued the settlers from the beginning. On reaching Cape Breton, the vessel containing the emigrants was driven back by a storm, and the expedition wintered at St. John's in Newfoundland. The following year another vessel came out, inspected the coast of Nova Scotia, and forthwith returned to Britain. An excellent account was given of the country, and in a pamphlet[1] published by Alexander in 1624, he spoke of 'the very delicate meadows, with roses white and red, and the very good fat earth,' which his people had found in Nova Scotia. The report was true; but the promised land was not destined for their inheritance.

So far no results had been obtained, and the proprietor had lost £6000 on his venture. The sum was repaid him out of the national exchequer; but in 1628 a colony was at length planted, consisting of 'seventy men and two women, with some cannon, musket, powder, and bullet, in case of some sudden invasion, together with all things necessary for their present use.' In the following year, however, no fewer than thirty settlers were found to have died from exposure, and those who still remained alive were in a miserable condition.

Yet Alexander was not discouraged. His patent of nobility, granted in 1633, added the empty title of Viscount of Canada to the more real honour of Earl of Stirling, and about the same time negotiations with the New England Company gave him the right to the 'county of Canada.' But both

[1] Entitled *Encouragement to Colonies.*

title and right were mere words when not supported by deeds, and deeds were now beyond the reach of Stirling's nearly exhausted purse. In the year 1640 he died insolvent, the victim of his own too great ambition; his feeble colony, unsupported from Scotland, and attacked by the French and aborigines of Nova Scotia, was already dead.

Eight years previously, Charles I. had resigned all the British claims on Nova Scotia in favour of Louis XIII. of France; and for twenty years Acadia makes no appearance in English history. The French again returned to the peninsula, and, despite internal disagreement and even serious quarrels in their petty establishments, the place now made some progress.

But there was rivalry between Port Royal and Boston. The old enmity between the two nations had crossed the Atlantic, and the Puritan settlers of New England were jealous of the French adventurers in the north. In religion, in government, and in social customs, Massachusetts and Acadia were widely different, and notwithstanding an agreement 'made and ratified at Boston in the Massachusetts, October 8th, 1644,' that peace should henceforth be preserved between the English and French in America, those differences led to continual strife.

The Struggle for Acadia, 1654-1710.

During the struggle that followed, the English were nearly always the aggressors in Acadia, since they were stronger than the French at sea; the French, on the other hand, were the aggressors in the continental war that was directed from Canada upon the rear of the British colonies. The supremacy of Cromwell in England was the opportunity of the Puritans in the new world. The settled foreign policy of the Protector was one of determined and forcible expansion; and when he fitted out an expedition for the recovery of Nova Scotia in 1654, he had the cordial support of both Old and New England.

A feeble resistance from the French garrison at Port Royal

did not save the place from capture, and for thirteen years Nova Scotia was again nominally held by England. In 1667, however, the peninsula was restored to the French under the terms of the Treaty of Breda; but the renewed outbreak of war between France and England in 1689 once more made Acadia the sport of the two rivals. An expedition thither was despatched from Massachusetts in the following year, and again the weak defences of Port Royal were quickly reduced. The English retained for a time a precarious hold of the disputed territory; in 1696, however, the Treaty of Ryswick restored it to France; but when the European war again broke out, Acadia was still the scene of the chief struggle in America, and after an unsuccessful British expedition had been directed against Port Royal in 1707, an attack three years later finally reduced the French headquarters on the peninsula.

Nova Scotia a British Colony—

From that time Nova Scotia has belonged to Britain; but its history as a centre of strife between the two nations did not close even with the cession of the peninsula by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. Bitter memories of the struggle remained alive on both sides. The French Acadians were not likely to forget the unprovoked attacks that had been made on them, nor could they yet abandon the hope that their adopted country would eventually be restored to France in the long contest which was now opening out for the possession of the whole of North America; while the English citizens of Massachusetts and Connecticut could never forgive the innumerable forays against their farms and cities in which the French and redskins had made common cause.

There could be no sympathy between conqueror and conquered. Too many French farmers had been forced to retreat hurriedly up the rivers of Acadia with helpless, starving wives and families; too many had watched, from those forests in the interior which were their only refuge, the redden-

ing sky that told of home and church and village in the hands of a merciless foe. Too many English families had lost a father in a sudden raid by French and natives from the backwoods; too many sons had been carried off from peaceful occupations to unnamed tortures by a relentless, vigilant, and almost invisible enemy, for peace to reign between the two nations in the West.

Acadia had proved an unhappy heritage to its French settlers. But they loved it the more that it had cost them so dear; and though none had prospered, since none could prosper in a land from which the shadows of war were never absent, few deserted the peninsula when it finally became Nova Scotia and a province of the British Empire. And if their motherland was lost to them, their religion was preserved; for by a tolerant provision of the Peace of Utrecht, the French Acadians were free to preserve the Catholic faith of which they were among the most ardent and faithful followers.

—With French Subjects.

The rule of Britain was mild; a simple oath of fealty to the Crown was all that was required from her unwilling subjects, and even that was not enforced for many years. The English, in fact, left the Acadians, wrote a French officer in 1750, 'an appearance of liberty so excessive that they had not intervened in their disputes or even punished their crimes. They allowed them to refuse with insolence certain moderate rents payable in grain and lawfully due. They passed over in silence the contemptuous refusal of the Acadians to take titles from them for the new lands which they chose to occupy.'

For the rest, the French were untaxed, and they were far more free than they had been under their own monarch. No military service was now required of them, and there was no uncertainty in the tenure of their lands; nor had they the mortification of seeing themselves surrounded by settlers of alien tongue. The toleration was due mainly to neglect, for

the British Government knew little[1] and troubled less about either the condition or the development of the new province of the empire, and an official report of the year 1743 states that, so far from encouraging British immigration, 'few or no English were settled here besides the garrison of Annapolis and two or three families.' The French population, on the other hand, which in 1670 had numbered not more than nine hundred, had increased by 1748 to some thirteen thousand.

The French Acadians.

Thus the French Acadians increased and multiplied, and ideal pictures have been drawn by poets and historians of their new happiness in their now tranquil homes. The Abbé Raynal devoted a page of his description of New France to a delightful account of the pastoral joys of Acadia—that polished French writer, who had never visited the province, and whose cultured tastes would have ill accorded with the primitive pleasures of its peasant farmers, forgot, or at least omitted, to mention that such progress as Nova Scotia had made was due to Britain. If England must bear the responsibility for the early miseries which her jealous ambition had brought upon the province, she may at least claim some credit for the easy yet secure government under which the Acadians now dwelt. And Longfellow, the poet of New England, was so moved by the story of the happiness of the Acadians at this time, and by the pathos of their later dispersion, that in his beautiful epic of Evangeline he did less than justice to those of his own ancestors who had felt the real menace of the French Empire in America.[2]

[1] Two ridiculous anecdotes were told of a premier's ignorance of Acadia at this time. It was said that the Duke of Newcastle remarked, 'Oh, yes, yes—to be sure—Annapolis must be defended—troops must be sent to Annapolis. Pray, where is Annapolis?' And again of the same person, 'Cape Breton an island! wonderful!—show it me in the map. So it is, sure enough. My dear sir, you always bring us good news. I must go and tell the king that Cape Breton is an island.' The story may or may not be true; the important fact is that it was told as true at the time.

[2] The original of the story of Evangeline was told to Longfellow by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Some details in the picture of peaceful bliss were overdrawn; but contemporary records prove that the picture itself was not wholly imaginary. One who had lived among them reported the Acadians to be 'honest, sober, industrious, and virtuous; there were seldom any quarrels among them.' Agriculture was the basis of life; in summer the men were employed in husbandry, in winter in cutting timber and hunting; the women spent their time in carding, spinning, and weaving wool, flax, and hemp. The summer was given to work, the winter to hospitality, song, and dance, and the many festivals of the Catholic Church were occasions both of religious stimulation and of social enjoyment. Prosperity had come upon the Acadians under alien rule; 'few houses were to be found that had not a hogshead of French wine on tap,' and the flavour of the beverage was probably not less sweet that it had been smuggled.

As in most communities where simplicity has not been displaced by ceremonious luxury and the love of display, marriage took place early in life; but 'the young people were not encouraged to marry till the maid could weave a web of cloth, the youth make a pair of wheels; these qualifications were deemed essential to their well-doing, for whenever a marriage took place the whole village set about establishing the young couple. They built them a log house, cleared land sufficient for their immediate support, supplied them with some cattle, hogs, and poultry; and Nature, aided by their own industry, soon enabled them to assist others. Infidelity to the marriage bed was never heard of.'[1]

The Acadians were ignorant, but they were contented to be ignorant. As with their fellow settlers in Quebec, the priest was their unquestioned arbiter in all religious and in most secular disputes. From him they took counsel, and his precepts they obeyed without hesitation. His authority was paramount, and his word was law.

[1] *Narrative* published by Nova Scotia Historical Society.

Unhappily that authority was too often abused. The troubles which now arose, and which soon gained for Nova Scotia a mournful celebrity in our annals, may be traced almost entirely to the influence of the priests upon their docile congregations. That influence would indeed have been excellent, had it been confined to spiritual matters; but it was not. The priests were the agents of an earthly as well as of a heavenly king; the doctrines they preached included the gospel of loyalty to Louis XV. as well as to Christ; and political recusance was often confused with eternal salvation. On this point, of priestly complicity in the political movement, there can be no doubt whatever. The French Bishop of Quebec represented to the court of his sovereign that more missionaries were needed to keep the Acadians—who were now admittedly British subjects—faithful to France and the Catholic Church. Complaints were made that some of the priests were too old or too lazy to incite their flock to disaffection against the British: and encouragement was everywhere given to those who kept the redskins and the Acadians aflame against the new government.

It has been said that the Church which forgets its higher mission so far as to interfere in political disputes, seals its own doom; but an exception must be made in the case of the Roman Church in Acadia. The activities of its priests ruined their flocks, but the priests themselves were respected and trusted to the last, and not one word of complaint seems to have been uttered by the victims against those who must bear the real responsibility for the expulsion of the French settlers from Nova Scotia.

It is a curious proof of the easy nature of English rule in the peninsula that the priests were seldom required to take an oath to do nothing contrary to the interests of Britain; and that, although their deeds were well known, few were punished for their frequently outrageous acts and language. Yet they often exceeded the limits of common prudence;

'the fear was,' wrote the French Colonial Minister to the Governor of Louisbourg in 1752, 'that their zeal might carry them too far. Excite them to keep the Indians in our interest, but do not let them compromise us. Act always so as to make the English appear the aggressors.' And another royal instruction required the missionaries 'not to slacken their efforts, but to warn them at the same time so to contain their zeal as not to compromise themselves with the English, and give just occasion of complaint.' The policy was as clever as it was unscrupulous: but in the end it over-reached its aim.

Yet despite such wanton and continued provocation, the Imperial Government introduced no repressive measures. British rule was admitted by the French themselves to be 'a striking example of mildness.' But it may well be doubted whether the extraordinary toleration displayed in Nova Scotia at this time was not in the end less merciful than a little judicious severity. It is not always wise to wait in the open until the storm bursts.

The Foundation of Halifax, 1749.

But during the war of 1745 many of the Acadians had risen against their rulers, and that fact at length aroused the imperial authorities to a sense of their danger. Nova Scotia had never been a British colony in the true sense of the word. Emigration from the motherland had been directed to New England, to New York, to Carolina and Georgia, but never to Acadia. It was now wisely determined to give some further sign of possession than was implied by the presence of a garrison at Annapolis; and in June 1749, a fleet of transports laden with two thousand five hundred emigrants sailed into Chebucto Harbour. Fair terms had been offered them; farmers, labourers, mechanics, and discharged soldiers and sailors had eagerly answered the demand for settlers, and within a few months the city of Halifax began to rise from the wilderness.

The new capital of Nova Scotia was not planted, as the French had always planted their posts, in the most fertile districts of the peninsula : but it had the enormous advantage over the ports of Canada that it was always free of ice, and therefore destined to grow with the growth of American shipping. Halifax was the only one of the older British settlements in the West which was planted directly under royal auspices, and its growth was slow but regular. Eighty years later, when the population had not yet reached twenty-five thousand, it was remarked that everything was still in its infancy, living being very cheap and the society like that of an English provincial town,[1] and some time afterwards Charles Dickens complimented the inhabitants on the cheerful, thriving, and industrious appearance of their city.

The foundation of Halifax was a serious blow to the French, for it was the first sign that the British had determined never to abandon Nova Scotia, and that they would endeavour, if possible, to anglicise the whole peninsula. And the growing pretensions of the older French settlers were now to be curbed. Many of them, it is true, were peaceful and law-abiding subjects ; but arcadian simplicity is not incompatible with political enmity, and their frequent complicity and occasional participation in the outrages committed by the redskins upon the British settlers could no longer be either doubted or overlooked. Those outrages were now increasing, as the conflict between Britain and France for the western world drew to a head ; and for this reason Cornwallis,[2] the governor of the colony, notified the Acadians in 1749 that they must bind themselves in future to an allegiance as complete as that of other British subjects.

The unexpected order caused immediate consternation.

[1] Moorsom. In Marsden's *Narrative of a Mission* an anecdote is told of an admiral who sent ashore to Halifax for a dollar's worth of lobsters. The gallant admiral was astonished but not displeased when he received a whole boat-load for his money.

[2] Uncle of the Cornwallis of Yorktown and Indian fame.

The French protested that they were 'resolved not to take the oath which your excellency requires of us; but if your excellency will grant us our old oath, with an exemption for ourselves and our heirs from taking up arms, we will accept it.' The insolent alternative, which presumed upon the leniency of a too easy government, was at once rejected; but the Acadians were not greatly perturbed by the reply of Cornwallis. Often before had they been told that they must either take the oath or leave the country, yet no evil consequences had ensued upon their refusal; it was but natural that they should treat this last declaration as another idle threat.

They were not altogether mistaken in their man. 'My friends,' said Cornwallis to a deputation of Acadians, 'I am not ignorant of the fact that every means has been used to alienate the hearts of the French subjects of His Britannic Majesty'; but although many were now tempted to leave Nova Scotia for those American colonies which still belonged to France, the question of the oath still remained open. And the successor of Cornwallis was equally mild. 'You are to look on the French inhabitants,' he instructed his officers, 'in the same light as the rest of His Majesty's subjects, for which reason nothing is to be taken from them by force, or any price set upon their goods but what they themselves agree to. And if at any time the inhabitants should obstinately refuse to comply with what His Majesty's service may require of them, you are not to redress yourself by military force or in any unlawful manner, but to lay the case before the governor and await his orders thereon.'

Such forbearance was not appreciated, and the outrages upon the British settlers increased. But the tempest which had been hovering over Acadia for so long was now to break; and the work of purging the peninsula of its French Catholics was entrusted to those New Englanders who had been their constant and implacable enemies.

Expulsion of the Acadians, 1755.

Early in the year 1755, Shirley, the Commander-in-Chief of Massachusetts, ordered John Winslow of that province to raise two thousand volunteers. The task presented no difficulties; in April the men assembled at Boston, and after some delay the expedition sailed.

At sunset on 1st June the force reached Nova Scotia and anchored near Beauséjour, one of the chief centres of the French Acadians. A few of the inhabitants were found under arms; the majority were fearful that the arrival of so large a force betokened some great disaster.

Their foreboding was not incorrect. Some weeks now passed in idleness; but at length 'it was determined to remove all the French inhabitants out of the province.' The entire male population of the neighbourhood was suddenly commanded to assemble at Beauséjour. Not more than a third of the number obeyed; but those who appeared were informed, in Winslow's[1] words, that 'they were declared rebels, their lands, goods, and chattels forfeited to the Crown, and their bodies to be imprisoned.' Upon this sentence being pronounced, the gates of the fort were shut, and 'they were all confined, to the amount of four hundred men and upwards.'

The blow fell like a bombshell on Beauséjour; but in other parts of Acadia similar measures were now being introduced. At Grand Pré the people had refused to take the oath of allegiance. They were informed that they 'could be no longer looked on as subjects to His Britannic Majesty, but as subjects to the King of France, and as such they must hereafter be treated; and they were ordered to withdraw.' Alarmed at such unwonted sternness, the recusants offered to take the oath. They were informed that their submission came too late; they had refused under persuasion, and could not be trusted under compulsion. And the Acadians of the Anna-

[1] Winslow's *Diary* is a most valuable document. It is reprinted entire in the *Transactions of the Nova Scotia Historical Society*.

polis district, less pliable than their fellows elsewhere, declared that they would lose their lands rather than take the oath.

It now only remained to finish the wretched business. 'The affair,' wrote Winslow, 'looked odd, and would appear so in future history.' But immediate danger is of more importance than the possible condemnation of posterity, and once determined on, it was evident that 'the sooner we strike the better.'

Accordingly, on 2nd September 1755, a proclamation was issued enjoining 'old men and young men, as well as all the lads of ten years of age, to attend at the church in Grand Pré on Friday, the fifth instant, at three of the clock in the afternoon, that we may impart what we are ordered to communicate to them; declaring that no excuse will be admitted on any pretence whatsoever, on pain of forfeiting goods and chattels in default.' On the appointed day, four hundred and eighteen persons answered the summons.

A table had been placed in the middle of the church where they were assembled, and from it Winslow addressed the doomed Acadians. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I have received from his excellency, Governor Lawrence, the king's instructions, which I have in my hand. By his orders you are called together to hear His Majesty's final resolution concerning the French inhabitants of this his province of Nova Scotia, who for almost half a century have had more indulgence granted them than any of his subjects in any part of his dominions. What use you have made of it you yourselves best know.

'The duty I am now upon, though necessary, is very disagreeable to my natural will and temper, as I know it must be grievous to you, who are of the same species. But it is not my business to animadvert on the orders I have received, but to obey them; and, therefore, without hesitation, I shall deliver to you His Majesty's instructions and commands, which are that your lands and tenements and cattle and live stock of all kinds are forfeited to the Crown, with all your

other effects, except money and household goods, and that you yourselves are to be removed from this his province.

'The peremptory orders of His Majesty are that all the French inhabitants of these districts be removed, and through His Majesty's goodness I am directed to allow you the liberty of carrying with you your money and as many of your household goods as you can take without overloading the vessels you go in. I shall do everything in my power that all these goods be secured to you, and that you be not molested in carrying them away, and also that whole families shall go in the same vessel; so that this removal, which I am sensible must give you a great deal of trouble, may be made as easy as His Majesty's service will admit; and I hope that in whatever part of the world your lot may fall, you may be faithful subjects, and a peaceable and happy people. I must also inform you that it is His Majesty's pleasure that you remain in security under the inspection and direction of the troops that I have the honour to command.'

The wretched prisoners were lodged in the church, and their stricken families brought them food. A few days later some were ordered on board the ships. They refused to go, and the New England soldiers advanced towards them with bayonets fixed. The foremost 'obeyed, and the rest followed, though slowly, and went off praying, singing, and crying, being met by the women and children all the way (which was a mile and a half) with great lamentation, upon their knees, praying.' As they marched to the vessel they sang a pathetic hymn of the passing nature of human happiness :—

'Tout passe
Sous le firmament;
Tout n'est que changement
Tout passe;
Le monde va roulant
Et dit en s'écoulant,
Tout passe.'

The pitiable scene was repeated again and again. The escort returned for more prisoners, and in time the whole were aboard. 'And thus,' wrote Winslow, 'ended this troublesome job; this affair was more grievous to me than any service I was ever employed in. . . . I know they deserve all, and more, than they feel; yet it hurts me to hear their weeping.'

'I am extremely pleased,' said an officer engaged on similar work in another part of Nova Scotia, 'that the poor devils are so resigned. Here they are more patient than I could have expected for people in their circumstances; and what surprises me still more is the indifference of the women, who really are, or seem, quite unconcerned.' But not all submitted quietly to their fate. Some escaped to the backwoods, preferring the wilderness of Nature in their own country to the wilderness of strange faces which they must meet in exile. And some, 'carried away by excessive attachment to their husbands, and closing their ears to the voice of religion and their missionary, threw themselves blindly and despairingly into the English vessels. And now was seen the saddest of spectacles, for some of these women, solely from a religious motive, refused to take with them their grown-up sons and daughters.'

A long delay occurred after the embarkation of the Acadians before the vessels sailed; and the last hope of the unhappy exiles disappeared as they saw the houses and barns in which they had lived and worked given over to the flames. Many weeks had passed when the last transport left Nova Scotia; it was already winter when the hateful work was done.

The exodus was now complete. More than six thousand of the French Acadians had been removed; in some districts not one of their number remained. Those refugees who had fled into the woods returned by stealth to take one last look at the homes from which they had been driven; they found but a few blackened timbers.

Yet their fate was less hard than that of those who had been transported. Some of the latter escaped to Canada; but they found no welcome among their compatriots on the mainland. Their distress, says the chronicle of the Ursulines of Quebec, was indescribable, and Montcalm's aide-de-camp noticed that they were 'dying wholesale. Their past and present misery, joined to the rapacity of the Canadians, who sought only to squeeze from them all the money they could, and then refused them the help so dearly bought, was the cause of this mortality. . . . A citizen of Quebec was in debt to the Government officials. He had no means of paying. They gave him a number of Acadians to board and lodge. He starved them with hunger and cold, took from them what money they possessed, and thus paid the extortionate official. What a country!'

Some drifted from Canada to the southern French colony in Louisiana; a few ventured back to Nova Scotia, where they concealed themselves in the woods with their fellow-refugees. The majority, however, had been transferred by the British Government to the English colonies, from the fear that they might otherwise settle in Canada and thus add to the strength of the French Empire in the West. But the English in America had no desire to receive them. Their maintenance was a burden: their presence a nuisance. They were not unkindly treated, but their nation was disliked and their religion despised; and the exiles, on their part, returned the sentiment with a cordial accession of hatred against their conquerors. They were still unhappy, for they could not forget their old homes and the land they loved so well; and although care had been taken that the members of a family should not be parted in exile, some separations took place; while to friends and lovers no such consideration could be shown. There must have been many Evangelines who sorrowed and watched in vain during the long dreary years of exile, for means of communication were few, and informa-

tion as to the fate of old-time neighbours was impossible to obtain.

The expatriation of the Acadians, a measure unique in the annals of the British Empire, was necessary for the safety of Nova Scotia. The step was indeed regrettable. It was disliked by those who were charged with its execution. But it was carried out with all possible humanity. And the true responsibility must be adjudged to lie at the door of those French ministers in Paris and Quebec who incited the Acadians to harass their rulers; at the door of those French priests whose sacred mission was made a cloak for political propaganda; it cannot be imputed to the British Government, which for forty years ruled its alien subjects with unparalleled lenity, which allowed them the undisturbed use of their religion and language, which left them untaxed, and for long dispensed with any oath of allegiance, and which in the end only decided on their expulsion when they had repeatedly refused to take that oath and had shown themselves the implacable enemies of the British settlers in a British possession. It must be the verdict of history that the expulsion of the Acadians from Nova Scotia in the year 1755 was a measure which has cast a far smaller stain—if, indeed, it has cast a stain at all—on the good fame of Britain, than the wanton destruction of Port Royal by the English of Virginia in 1613.

A few years more, and the French Empire in America had fallen. There was now no longer any danger of Nova Scotia being disturbed by the interference of the agents of the French court, and the sentence of banishment passed upon the Acadians was mercifully revoked. All who wished to return were allowed to do so on taking the oath of allegiance, and many hastened back to the ruined homes which had not been forgotten during eight years of exile. Life was begun afresh; waste tracts were cleared, farms were cultivated, houses were built, and again the

The Acadians Return, 1763.

Acadians were settled—a peaceful and happy people, in the country which they had never ceased to look on as their own.

But a great change was now coming over Nova Scotia. Hitherto it had always been predominantly French; it was now mainly English in population. Many immigrants were arriving from Britain every year and settling in the colony; fresh districts were being opened up, and new energy infused into the life of the peninsula. But such increase was small in amount when compared with the great influx that took place after the Imperial Civil War. Halifax was the place to which the first of the refugees were brought from Boston in 1776; and though the younger city naturally contained fewer comforts than the capital of New England, many among the United Empire Loyalists liked its situation and believed in the future of Nova Scotia.[1]

British Immigration and Development, 1763-1867.

They could not, and they had no wish, to go back to their deserted homes, when the older British colonies became an independent American republic. And Acadia, which had seen its original settlers suffer for their unquenchable loyalty to the King of France a generation before, now beheld others, who had likewise suffered for their loyalty to the King of England, flock to its shores and to the neighbouring districts as a land of refuge. Loyalty, indeed, seemed to flourish in that atmosphere as it had never flourished in New England; even the misrule which subsequently took place in Prince Edward Island could not quench it. 'Loyalty must surely be indigenous to the soil,' said an historian of the colony, 'when it flourishes under such adverse circumstances'; but the solid attachment to the empire that distinguished the people of the Canadian maritime provinces was fortified by

[1] Boston was at that time at least equal to Philadelphia in the wealth and comfort of its inhabitants; both cities had some reason to consider themselves more important than New York.

the intimate ties of blood and cemented by the recollection of past suffering.

Within the half-century from 1767 to 1817, the population of Nova Scotia had increased from 11,779 to 81,351; but another wave of immigration—the result of the close of the Napoleonic war and the distress and unemployment which prevailed at that time in Britain—raised the number of its inhabitants to 123,630 in 1827, and to 202,575 in the subsequent decennial period.

The religion of the colony had likewise changed with the change in the nationality of its people. The fervent Catholicism of the older French settlers had given way before the rigid, unbending Protestantism of the British immigrants; and a traveller who visited Nova Scotia in the year 1791 remarked that among its people 'a few, and but a very few, belonged to the Anglican Church. A few were Presbyterian Dissenters. The Methodists bore the sway, most all of them Yorkshiremen; in general they were an ignorant, vulgar race, unenlightened by knowledge and misled by delusion, animated by party spirit and carried away by zeal.' It may be assumed that the author of these observations was neither a Methodist nor a Yorkshireman; but, however deficient some of the earlier settlers may have been in the polish of their manners, the sturdy physique and dogged perseverance of the north-country Britons were more useful qualities for those pioneers to possess who were opening up the interior of Nova Scotia.

The age of strife was now over; that of more fruitful, peaceful development had begun. Henceforth there are few events to call for special notice in Nova Scotian annals; the general life of the peninsula gradually merges into that of the British-American mainland, and in the year 1867 the colony entered the larger political federation of the Dominion of Canada.[1]

[1] See ch. v.

The island of Cape Breton,[1] which stands like an advanced outpost of Nova Scotia against the Atlantic, owes its brief appearance in history to the expulsion of the French from Nova Scotia. Hardly less valuable as a fishing centre than Newfoundland, it was visited regularly from the time of its discovery by the fleets of every European nation; but although claimed by France as part of Acadia, and by England as part of Nova Scotia, it was occupied by neither nation. In the year 1686 it contained not a single European family; but in 1713, when France ceded Nova Scotia and her possessions in Newfoundland to Britain, Cape Breton necessarily became her chief, as it was her last, maritime outpost in Canada. The historian Charlevoix thought so highly of the island as to consider its retention 'an ample recompense for the loss of Newfoundland'; but his sanguine opinion was not shared either in France or Acadia.

Cape Breton Island, 1758.

The French inhabitants of Placentia in Newfoundland, and many of the Acadians, were now removed to Cape Breton. The town of Louisbourg was founded, and within a few years the enormous sums—to the extent of £1,200,000—which were spent on its fortification, rendered it the strongest naval and military station in the new world. The place was stated, and probably believed, to be impregnable; it soon became a serious menace to the British-American colonies, and a thorn in the side of New England.

But despite its strength and their supposed weakness, the English colonists determined to attempt its reduction on the outbreak of war in 1745. A force of four thousand three hundred men was organised and despatched by Massachusetts and the neighbouring states, and early in the summer the first siege of Louisbourg began.

The expedition bore something of the character of a crusade.

[1] The origin of the name is uncertain. Some suppose the island to have been called after Cap Breton, near Bayonne, in France, by Basque fishermen; others derive it from the Bretons in north-eastern France.

The French were religious as well as political enemies, and the pious Protestants of New England were happy in the conviction that they were assisting heaven as well as their king in attacking Cape Breton. A day of fasting and prayer had been held before the troops started; a chaplain accompanying the army had brought a hatchet, with which he intended to destroy the images in the Catholic churches of the island, while the soldiers were engaged in the more dangerous work of destroying the islanders themselves; and the troops were encouraged on their arrival by a sermon from the text: 'Enter into His courts with thanksgiving, and into His gates with praise.'

Whatever may have been the effect of their spiritual zeal, their military ardour gave them the victory. An incessant and destructive fire was maintained against Louisbourg, and it was discovered afterwards that every house in the town was riddled with shot, the roofs were all beaten in with bombs, and both the citadel and hospital were almost demolished. No succour reached the besieged from Europe; the French troops defending the place were gradually worn out; and on 17th June 1745, the British flag was hoisted over the great French stronghold.

The news of its capture, we are told, 'filled New England with joy and Europe with astonishment'; the fall of Louisbourg, in fact, was at once the knell of French power in the West, and an unmistakable proof of the growing strength of the English colonies. But important though its capture was, Cape Breton was exchanged for Madras three years later at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, to the delight of the French and the disgust of the New Englanders. The latter were by no means recompensed with the grant from the Imperial Parliament which repaid their expenses in the late expedition; for nothing could recompense them for the death of the hundreds of young New Englanders who lay buried in Cape Breton; no money could give them the feeling of

security which would never be possessed while the French flag still floated over Louisbourg.

Ten years later, however, on 26th July 1758, the place was again, and this time finally, captured by the British. At the peace of 1763 all claim to the possession of Cape Breton was formally resigned by France, and the fortifications of Louisbourg were completely demolished.

Since its acquisition by England, the history of the island has again become merged in that of Nova Scotia, and save for a few years between 1784 and 1819, during which its affairs were administered separately, it has been treated as a county of the larger neighbouring peninsula. Its population in 1774 consisted of 1241 persons, of whom 502 were French, 509 English, and 230 aboriginal redskins; but the arrival some years later of a number of Scottish immigrants and American loyalists, gave it the predominantly British character which it retains to this day.

The history of Prince Edward Island,[1] like that of Cape Breton, is inevitably connected with the rest of Acadian annals by geographical position. Like Cape Breton, too, the island was neglected by the earlier generations of Canadian pioneers, and no permanent population arrived on its shores until some French settlers from Nova Scotia went thither, when their own province was ceded to Britain in 1713. Forty years later it contained 1354 inhabitants; but about this time several hundreds of the French Acadians, who had been expelled by the British Government from their old homes in the peninsula, joined their compatriots in Prince Edward Island. This second wave of immigration raised the population to about four thousand.

Prince Edward Island, 1758-1875.

It was the fate of that stubborn but unfortunate race of men to fall again under the dominance of Britain. They

[1] The present name was not given until 1798. Previously it was known as the Isle of St. John.

hated the English with undying hate; yet were they enmeshed within the circle of the great political struggle, and these helpless pawns in the struggle of rival empires found themselves once more unwilling subjects of an alien king when Prince Edward Island fell to Britain in 1758. Their condition had been miserable in the extreme, even though the island had belonged to France; a French priest, who accompanied them into exile, wrote that 'Many could not protect themselves day or night from the severity of the cold. Most of the children were entirely naked; and when he went into a house they were all crouched in the ashes, close to the fire. They ran off and hid themselves, without shoes, stockings, or shirts. Nearly all were in want.' The mortality had been very great; but many of their number were now transported back to France, the British Government having no desire to be burdened further with the rule of those who had already proved themselves irreconcilable subjects.

The whole history of Prince Edward Island, for more than a century after that time, is comprised in the struggle between the resident farmers and absentee proprietors of the soil. In the year 1763 the Earl of Egmont petitioned the king for a grant of the entire island. He stated that he proposed to divide it, after the old Saxon custom, into hundreds; the hundreds were to be ruled by barons under his authority as lord paramount. The land was to be further divided among eight hundred freeholders; but every baron was to build a castle or blockhouse and to provide a site for a town.

The plan was rejected by the Board of Trade and Plantations on the ground that it was better suited for defence than for settlement. It might also have been rejected on the ground that it was better suited to mediæval than modern times; or approved on the ground that it was far better than the system which the Board itself inaugurated four years later. In 1767 the whole island was divided into lots by that department, and all these lots were disposed of by auction

in a single day. No conditions were laid down as to settlement, save that quitrents were to be paid, that no Catholics were to be allowed to own or cultivate land, and that every schoolmaster who proposed to live on the island should first take out a licence from the Bishop of London.

The system could not easily have been worse; but the British Government contrived to make it so, by adding an absurdity to an anachronism. Not content with importing ancient religious prejudices into a modern colony, they thought it necessary to introduce the political institutions of England into a land that had as yet no English population. Nothing was done to bring British settlers to Prince Edward Island till 1779; but a constitution had already been granted on the model of that of England, and the first Assembly of the province was convened in 1773 at the newly-founded capital of Charlottetown.

So few were the British inhabitants of the island that an attempt to raise a force for its protection during the Imperial Civil War failed; but at the close of the war many of the United Empire Loyalists came thither to settle, and in 1803 some eight hundred Scottish Highlanders were brought out by the Earl of Selkirk.

Prince Edward Island might now have been prosperous, for its soil was fertile and its people industrious; but the absentee proprietors refused to do anything for their tenants, and private indignation and public protests in the Assembly were alike unavailing. Petitions were sent home again and again; but the Imperial Government would do nothing save point out that the rights of property were sacred and inalienable. It appears to have escaped the attention of British statesmen that the possession of property implies duties as well as rights, and that in any case their own act had brought this trouble on the island.

The shadow of the land question continued to blight the otherwise bright prospects of the colony. One of its

governors was suspected of profiting from the sale of estates, and when his name was involved in a scandal that concerned the irregular possession of a lady as well as the irregular possession of land, he found it prudent to retire. As population increased, leaseholds were gradually changed into freeholds whenever the opportunity of purchase offered; but many of the proprietors refused to sell, and there are no known means of either persuading or intimidating an absentee landlord.

Remote and isolated as the island was, its people were helpless. But the confederation of Canada in 1867 gave them their opportunity, and although many distrusted the new policy, and thus delayed the union of the island with the Dominion until 1873, the step proved their salvation. Two years later a Bill was brought forward which provided that various estates on the island, after being valued by arbitration, should be sold under compulsion. None doubted the wisdom, but a few questioned the justice of a method which frequent use has since made familiar; yet the Bill passed, and the long-vexed problem was solved. Had the people persisted, like those of Newfoundland, in remaining outside the Dominion, the proprietors would probably have been strong enough to prevent the passing of an Act which saved the colony by protecting it from its owners.

From that time Prince Edward Island has advanced steadily. It became the most thickly populated province of Canada, and although the call of the newer West tempted many of its people to remove their homes and try their fortunes beyond Winnipeg, the 'garden colony of the Dominion' was still able to enumerate in the year 1901 over one hundred thousand prosperous and contented citizens, the vast majority of whom were occupied in agricultural pursuits.

The largest and youngest of the Acadian provinces, the colony of New Brunswick, is historically the child of the Peace of Paris, and geographically the link between Nova

Scotia and the continental Dominion. Before the year 1763 the forest-laden land which stretched unexplored between the St. Lawrence and the Bay of Fundy was known but to a few French settlers near the isthmus which connects New Brunswick with Nova Scotia, and to a few refugees from Acadia, who had made their homes at the mouth of the great river St. John. For the rest, this country of woods and waters remained untouched by Europeans; the redskin and his quarry roamed the district undisturbed by the invading white.

New Brunswick, 1762.

But the Puritan people of New England hungered after the land of the earth below as well as the righteousness of heaven above, and the power of France had not long been shattered in America before the pioneers of Massachusetts and Connecticut were found trading in Quebec. Their absurd claims to dominate the older people of that province were promptly repudiated; but they played a more useful part in the yet unoccupied land of New Brunswick.

On 28th August 1762, one James Simonds, of New England, arrived at the place where now stands the flourishing little city of St. John.[1] The spot was then silent and deserted, save for a few huts of the Acadian peasants, which alone bore witness to any previous human occupation; and the inmates promptly retreated further up the great river which leads into the heart of the interior. After a century of combat in Nova Scotia, the French Acadians had no desire to see more of their British neighbours than was absolutely necessary.

James Simonds at St. John.

But the mission of the excellent Simonds was innocent and pacific. No plans of conquest lurked within that placid bosom; no thoughts of immortal glory agitated that homely commercial head. He had merely come to see what business might be done in a land where, if the trader would have few

[1] See Simonds's *Letters*, published by the New Brunswick Historical Society.

clients, he would at any rate discover no price-cutting competitors. This first English pioneer in New Brunswick had probably been attracted thither by the proclamation which the imperial authorities had issued two years before, to the effect that all vacant lands in Nova Scotia were open to settlement. He certainly knew that the St. John River was in Nova Scotian territory; he may have been aware that a solemn treaty of peace had been concluded at Halifax on 1st July 1761, between the redskins of the district in which he stood, and the British Government.

In any case, Simonds liked the place and perceived its advantages. He had already wandered far and wide, and was now quite ready to take up his abode wherever a good opportunity might offer. It seemed that the mouth of the river was a likely place, and he determined to give it a trial. Once in after years, when his claim was attacked, Simonds recalled that 'at very great expense and at the risk of life he went through the greatest part of Nova Scotia, in time of war, in search of the best lands and situations; and having at length determined to settle at the river St. John, he had obtained a promise from Government of large tracts of land for himself and brother, who was with him in several of his tours. Considerable improvements were made (on these lands) at his expense in the year 1762.'

Thus far Simonds, the pioneer trader of New Brunswick, in reminiscent mood. Despite various disagreements, business prospered at his station, and other settlers were now attracted to the spot. By 1775 St. John contained seventy inhabitants, all of them certified as Protestants, and all from New England, save one solitary arrival from Ireland; the village of 'Conway on the western side of the harbour of St. John' also reckoned seventy-two persons, again all Protestants, and all save two of Anglo-American origin.

A Puritan Colony.

Higher up the river at Maugerville another little community

of New Englanders had been planted about the year 1764. After the good old custom of the Puritans these pioneer settlers in a virgin land had dedicated themselves to God, and, praying that He 'would be pleased to smile upon this our undertaking,' they had called themselves Israelites as His peculiar people. They subscribed a declaration of agreement to the doctrines of the Shorter Westminster Catechism and the New England Confession of Faith, 'not as supposing that there is any authority, much less infallibility, in these human creeds or forms; but verily believing that these principles are drawn from, and are agreeable to the holy scriptures, which is the foundation and standard of truth; hereby declaring our utter dislike of the Pelagian-Arminian principles, vulgarly so called.' Having thus asked the divine blessing on their enterprise, and defined their God amidst the woods and waters which He had created, they proceeded, with the invariable industry of the Puritan, to build themselves homes, to till the ground, and to encourage trade with the redskins.

The colony grew in numbers; but no sudden accession of wealth endangered its sober tastes. Food was plentiful, but luxuries were scarce; and some years later, when one of the chief citizens of Maugerville died, the whole of his simple furniture was sold for no more than £5, 7s. 8d. His clothing realised but £7, 13s. 3d., while 'a number of books' which he possessed fetched £2, 2s. 6d. The items in his library, which might have thrown some light on the literary tastes of the community, were unspecified; they were probably the sermons and theology which furnished every New England bookshelf, and which still constituted the staple reading of almost every Puritan family.

But this little offshoot of New England was now to be rudely disturbed. The Imperial Civil War broke out, and the Puritans of New Brunswick proclaimed their intention of throwing in their lot with their brethren of Massachusetts

and Connecticut. The decision was natural enough; but it was frustrated by the prompt action of Carleton, to whom alone it is attributable that the province still remains within the British Empire.

Some years later the Puritans on the St. John River were troubled when the United Empire Loyalists flocked into the district in such numbers as to overwhelm the original settlers. There was little sympathy between the two: the Loyalists disliked the older Puritans as would-be rebels, and the Puritans hated the immigrants as political reactionaries and ungodly interlopers. The community at Maugerville protested against 'the growth of immorality and the gloomy prospect of future generations growing up in the utmost dissipation,' which they anticipated from the influx of the Loyalists; but those overrighteous souls apparently feared no personal contamination, for they determined not to abandon 'the fruits of many years' painful industry' to the wicked. The mixture of godliness and worldliness in the later Puritan stock has seldom been more forcibly illustrated.

Loyalist Immigration.

The Loyalist influx now overspread the land, and by the side of the hundreds of refugee immigrants, such individual settlements as that of one William Davidson, in 1764—a Scot who was the pioneer settler in Northumberland County, who started the profitable salmon trade in that district, and who secured a grant of one hundred thousand acres—looked small and meagre. By 1784 the colony had grown sufficiently important to be divided from Nova Scotia and made into a separate province, at which time it first received the name of New Brunswick; and its capital city of Fredericton was now named after Frederick, the then Duke of York, the same settlement having been previously called Osnaburg and originally St. Annes.

New Brunswick now grew steadily. Its population in 1824 was already 74,176; by 1834 it had risen to 119,457;

and in 1861 it was 252,047. Emigration thither was encouraged,[1] for though but little farming was carried on, the timber trade and the fisheries found occupation for every settler. The woods of the province seemed as inexhaustible as the seas which surrounded it, since fresh trees quickly replaced those which had been cut down, and the forests of New Brunswick furnished its staple industry. A saw-mill for timber was the inevitable origin of every village,[2] as the woodman with his axe was the real pioneer of the interior, and the demand was so great that the colony found a ready market for its produce.

In the year 1867, New Brunswick, together with the mother province of Nova Scotia, entered the Dominion of Canada. Eight years later Prince Edward Island likewise joined the federation, and thus was the consolidation of British America completed, so far as the eastern maritime provinces of the mainland were concerned. From that time the separate annals of Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick cease. Their prosperity and population continued to advance; but their annals as a whole no longer call for individual treatment.

Union with Canada, 1867-73.

They felt the call of union, and they obeyed; henceforward they were no longer isolated communities, but individual members of the new Canadian nation.[3]

[1] There are many pamphlets in the Royal Colonial Institute advocating emigration to New Brunswick.

[2] See, for instance, the letter of a settler in the *Doncaster Gazette*, 21st January 1842. He wrote that the township of Stanley contained 'a church, two saw-mills, a grist mill, two taverns, a schoolhouse, a malt and oat kiln, a tannery, besides forges, etc.'

[3] A closer union of the three maritime provinces into one has been suggested (see *Acadiensis*, 1906, an excellent little magazine published for some years in Nova Scotia). The idea proved unfruitful.

CHAPTER III

THE TWO CANADAS: 1791-1837[1]

THE maritime provinces of British America, peaceful at length after the long wars during which they had hung in the balance between France and England, became in time definitely British communities; but in the heart of Canada, the two peoples yet lived separately side by side, the French in the older colony of Quebec, the British in the more recent foundation of Ontario.

There was no mingling of races, either in the ordinary

[1] Authorities.—The Official Reports on the Settlement of the Crown Lands in Canada should be consulted for full details of the settlement of Quebec and Ontario, and for the system of land tenure in the two colonies, Lord Durham's *Report* is essential.

Several writers treat incidentally of the social condition of Canada at this period, but few aspire to anything deeper than the ordinary narratives of travel. D'Arcy Boulton's *Sketch of Upper Canada* (1805) is little more than an itinerary. G. Heriot's *Travels* (1807) are occasionally useful. Hugh Gray, in *Letters from Canada* (1809), shows considerable prejudice against the French Canadians. Priscilla Wakefield's *Excursions in North America* (1810) are neither interesting nor valuable. The *Travels*, by John Lambert (1814), contain much information. Hall's *Travels in Canada* (1818) are amusing but not always accurate. *Life in Canada* and *Upper Canada Sketches*, by Thomas Conant, are too slight to be of much importance.

Among others that may be consulted with advantage are Sansom, an American, *Travels in Lower Canada* (1820); Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada* (1821); Silliman, *Tour to Quebec* (1822); Talbot, whose verdict is unfavourable, *Five Years' Residence* (1824); Hodgson, *Letters from North America* (1824); MacTaggart, who gives an adverse opinion of Canada, *Three Years in Canada* (1829); Magrath, *Letters from Upper Canada* (1833); Shirreff, *Tour through North America* (1835); Mrs. Jameson, *Winter Studies* (1838); *Six Years in the Bush* (1838, anonymous); Mrs. Traill, *Backwoods of Canada* (1839). Of equal use are the many pamphlets on the subject of Canada in the library of the Royal Colonial Institute in London.

To the latter I have referred more particularly in the footnotes; but I desire to take this opportunity of thanking Mr. J. R. Boosé and Mr. P. Evans Lewin, the kindly librarians of the Institute, and their assistants, on whose inexhaustible patience I have trespassed heavily during the composition of this work. I need not say more of them than that they are worthy of the magnificent collection which they superintend. I could not in justice say less.

intercourse of society or through the deeper ties of intermarriage; the differences between the settlers of the two provinces were still too great for any community of interest, and mutual toleration had not yet outgrown national dislike. The French remained Catholics, steady, industrious, and unambitious; the British were unbending Protestants, energetic, active, and aspiring.

With such divergences of character, and with the local jealousies inevitable in any young and neighbouring colonies to serve as a pretext for disputes, there could be no co-operation. Each province went its way; the only points of contact were occasions for disagreement.

The contrast between the two peoples was remarked by every traveller who visited Canada; but the life of the French settlers in Quebec had undergone little real change since the days when they had been subjects of the King of France.

Social Life in Quebec.

From Quebec to Montreal they were scattered in one long village, that bordered the St. Lawrence for a hundred and fifty miles. The civil laws and customs of old France still remained in partial use under the British Empire; the farmer ground his corn at the *seigneur's* mill, and divided his land after the Gallic custom among his many children as of yore. But he respected his *seigneur* less since the coming of English rule; for the *seigneur*, destitute of military employment, deprived of his semi-feudal dignities, and not greatly deferred to by the British Government in the city of Quebec, was a person of less consequence than heretofore. The *seigneur* had never been wealthy; but he now lost his other titles to consideration. And the old colony of Quebec, whose institutions had been so carefully planned on aristocratic lines, thus began to show those democratic tendencies which were widespread in every other European settlement in North America.

But if the importance of the old French-Canadian aristocracy was declining, that of the theocracy was still fully

maintained. The congregations of the Catholic Church in the province were, it is true, densely ignorant and therefore superstitious. The vast majority of the peasants could neither read nor write; and they were in that happy condition of mind in which they did not desire an education that they could not obtain.

Not until the year 1801 was it determined to establish an English school in each of the principal villages of the province of Quebec; even then the progress of knowledge was slow, and thirty years later it was stated as a fact that a great number of the teachers themselves could neither read nor write.[1]

The French Canadians remained, as of old, contented and docile sons of the Church. They believed implicitly and obeyed without hesitation; civil discontent might lift its unruly head from time to time, but religious discord never troubled the faithful.

It was an age of peace, perhaps of stagnation: the attacks which scientists and politicians were making on the Catholic Church in the old world affected not its Canadian adherents in the new; and the Protestantism of their English neighbours in Ontario and the United States was either dismissed with indulgent contempt, or detested as the heresy of the hated 'Bastonnais'—the men of Boston. The dream of extending the Catholic faith through the whole of North America had faded with the fall of the French Empire in the West; but those who had believed in both, at least remained true to their religion after the political ideal had vanished.

Every village of the province of Quebec contained a Roman Catholic church. Public life centred in its services; its *curé* was the first man in the little community. In common with all Christian ministers, he baptized the infants, he married the lovers, he buried the dead; but the scope of his work was far broader than this. The faithful came to him for spiritual guidance, the traveller for hospitality, the Government for

[1] See the Durham *Report*.

information. Few questions of importance, whether they concerned the family, the farm, or the province, were settled without his advice; and in general he performed his many duties extremely well. 'I know of no parochial clergy in the world,' wrote Lord Durham in 1838, 'whose practice of all the Christian virtues, and zealous discharge of their clerical duties, is more universally admitted, and has been productive of more beneficial consequences.'[1]

On every road, and between each village, a cross proclaimed the creed of the people; but the practical British travellers who visited the colony during these years were more surprised at the poverty of the farming than edified by the faith of the farmers. Yet the wants of the inhabitants were few and simple. They knew not the need of larger crops, and the consciousness of poverty cannot enter where content is king. They rarely deserted their abode for fresh habitations. They felt none of the restlessness of their British neighbours, who were entering the sister province of Ontario by hundreds every year, and sometimes quickly leaving it for the greater West or the United States; the French seldom extended even the range of their farms, and few attempted to reclaim any part of the virgin forest that covered the northern part of the province of Quebec.

The farmhouses of this peaceful peasantry were plain white-washed buildings; the home itself usually consisted of but one story, whose four rooms were surmounted by a garret in the sloping roof. The ventilation was seldom adequate; and during the long Canadian winter, when the house was warmed by logs of wood burnt in a closed stove, the fumes, the excessive heat, and the stale atmosphere combined, often sickened the unwary and unaccustomed visitor. But the family of the farmer crowded round the stove by day, and sometimes the men slept in front of it at night; yet their hardy constitutions seemed to be unharmed by the sudden

[1] The Durham *Report*.

change from an overheated room to the cold still air of the open.

A small orchard might or might not surround the house: but the French Canadians had not that love for a garden which distinguished the people of New England; and their fruit, like their other crops, was of inferior quality.

The French Canadians were peasants, and they practised the virtues of peasants. They were thrifty, even parsimonious, yet joyous and light-hearted withal, in their lives. Their manners were admitted by the most bigoted Protestant to be kindly, courteous, and respectful; and even the austere Puritan might have noted with approval that the women were soberly and quietly clad, and that the fashions in dress did not change once in a century.

The life of the French farmer in Quebec was therefore happy, since he had few ambitions, and none that he could not gratify. The real interests of his life lay, as of old, in his home, his village, and his church. His affection for France had lessened since the Revolution had overturned the throne of his fathers and proscribed the faith of his heart. And his loyalty to the British Crown was passive but genuine, for he was fairly treated by the Government; his property was respected, and his religion was tolerated.

Far different was the scene in Ontario, where a new colony was forming from a triple tide of immigration. The Loyalist refugees from the United States continued to enter Upper Canada, but in diminishing numbers. Other arrivals, whose loyalty consisted in an unremitting attention to their own personal interests, were attracted from the republic by the more material consideration of good cheap land. And the British Isles supplied a third stream of settlers of the yeoman and labouring classes, whose sturdy virtues and steady energy soon assured them a position of far greater independence and comfort than they could ever have attained in the land of their birth.

Upper Canada or Ontario.

It is the descendants of these three stocks, consolidated by intermarriage and the compelling force of similar interests, who form modern Ontario.

The United Empire Loyalists were the founders, and they remained the leaders, of Ontario from the earliest years of the colony. They were the backbone of the new province; they formed the nearest approach to an aristocracy which that democratic community possessed. Most of the best farms in the province were occupied or owned by the Loyalists, for they had been the first to enter Ontario; and the same force of character which impelled them to quit their old homes in the south gave them energy to establish themselves quickly and substantially in Ontario. Educated and intelligent men and women, they were able to adapt themselves once more to the hard life of pioneering which their ancestors had led; but in later years, when solitary farms grew into townships and townships developed into cities in Upper Canada, it was the United Empire Loyalists who formed the bulk of the professional and trading classes.

The United Empire Loyalists.

The other settlers from the republic, who could advance no such altruistic motives as the United Empire Loyalists for their immigration, were not at first very welcome with their neighbours. A colony that boasted fidelity to the Crown as the origin of its existence had little sympathy with men who could change their allegiance as easily as their clothes, and to whom patriotism was a mere matter of soil and crops.

The Republican Immigrants.

The later American settlers had, indeed, taken the oath of allegiance to Britain. But their political conscience was believed to be elastic; they were suspected, with that lack of logic which characterises so many popular alarms, of being at once secret emissaries of the republic and of repudiating all national ties. There may have been, in a few cases, some small ground for one or both those fears; but in general the

republican settlers hardly concerned themselves with politics. That was their country in which they lived; and if British institutions were neither so bad as the lively imagination of the United States Democrats pictured them, nor so perfect as the unquestioning devotion of the Loyalists insisted, they were at least good enough for a plain man to live and prosper under.[1]

The third class of immigrants that went to the making of Ontario were men and women of British stock; and the majority of these were of later arrival than the Loyalists and republicans.

The close of the Napoleonic wars found thousands of destitute families in Britain, ruined by high prices and lack of employment. An industrial crisis hung over the land, darkening the final triumph of Waterloo with the fear of civil disorder at home; poverty and distress were everywhere, alike in manufacturing town and agricultural county. To relieve all the deserving poor was impossible. The well-meant efforts of kindly charity merely sapped their independence; the old methods of repression had failed again and again. There seemed no likelihood of improvement for many years; and in these circumstances, emigration was resorted to as a palliative of unemployment.

The British Immigrants.

Committees were formed, money was raised, plans were discussed: it was hoped that those who were lost to the kingdom might yet be saved to the empire; and the relative claims and advantages of the three colonies of Australia, South Africa, and Canada were debated. Some families were sent to each; but while the journey to Australia was expensive, and the land itself lay under the slur of crime,[2]

[1] A second peaceful invasion of Canada from the United States took place a century later and similar misgivings were expressed. See Louis Corbally in the *English National Review*, 1908.

[2] It may interest Canadians to recall that MacTaggart in 1829 recommended the British Government to transport some of its criminals to Ontario. Happily the advice was not acted upon.

while South Africa was new and little known, Canada was welcomed as a country at once comparatively easy of access, of good reputation, partially settled yet with vast areas still uncleared. Misconceptions still, indeed, prevailed as to the climate, but these were derided by old residents and travellers ; the soil had been proved fertile by pioneer farmers : a man had, at least, a better chance there than in England. To Ontario, therefore, the great bulk of British emigration was now directed for some years.

Many of the settlers welcomed the opportunity of a fresh career ; but some were fearful of the dangers of the voyage, the discomforts of a new land, the perils of the bush. A few returned discouraged, with grim stories of hopeless privations to justify their desertion ; the vast majority wrestled with untamed Nature in the wilds, and with mute unconscious courage struggled for a livelihood.

It would be tedious to follow one by one the fortunes of each party of emigrants ; an occasional example may suffice. In the year 1820 the Lanark district of Ontario was founded by the arrival of one thousand and seventy-six mechanics and labourers who were assisted to emigrate from Lanark and Glasgow in Scotland ; these prospered and sent home encouraging accounts of their labours, and many more followed their example.

The rivers Clyde and Tay, the towns of Lanark and Perth, which mark the map of Ontario on the Ottawa side, indicate at once the origin and the settlement of the lowland Scots.[1] And a compact body of Highlanders was planted during these years at Glengarry.

Three years later, in 1823, an attempt to send out emigrants

[1] It is interesting to note that several of the Carlyles of Ecclefechan, the relatives of Thomas Carlyle, emigrated to Ontario between 1840 and 1850. And two future Prime Ministers of Canada—J. A. Macdonald and George Brown—had already been brought over by their parents, the one from Glasgow, the other from near Edinburgh, some years before.

from Cork in Ireland met with opposition and distrust. The people were at first suspicious that the Government wished to be rid of them, that it meant them harm; yet a few consented to try their fortunes in a new country. Their reception among their new neighbours at Brockville on the St. Lawrence was cold and disappointing; for Ontario associated Protestantism with loyalty, and the Irish were as faithful to the Catholic Church as the French in Quebec.

But the new arrivals proved peaceful and industrious. Prosperity soon attended them; within three years, reported a traveller in the district, 'one family had twenty-three barrels of flour to dispose of'; others 'told me,' wrote a clergyman, 'that they never knew what happiness was till now.' Once more excellent reports were sent home; Erin no longer doubted the fertility of the West: and within a decade Ireland had contributed largely to the population of Ontario.

The farms of Sussex were likewise drawn upon for settlers, and some hundreds of destitute labourers were helped to emigrate by the gentlemen of the green county by the sea. Again the result was successful: the letters[1] which have been preserved from son or brother in Ontario to 'dear father and mother and brothers and sisters' in Sussex show how quickly the change from England to Canada was appreciated.

'In Canada,' wrote one, 'you can have your liberty, and need not be afraid to speak for your rights.' 'If I had known what America had been,' said another, 'I had been there some years ago. I earn more money in about five or six months than at home in a whole year.' A third, to whom poaching was probably no mystery, was happy that in Ontario there were 'no gamekeepers and more privileges.'

Others drew pictures of the new life which in their simple summary of facts were eloquent of the work that was going forward during these years in Upper Canada. 'We have

[1] *Letters from Sussex Emigrants* (1836). Printed at Petworth, Sussex.

fifty-one acres and a half. We had a little school all the winter's evenings; James Hall teached them. Jane have learnt a good deal, she reads middling well. They learned a good many hymns. We have a fine bed of cucumbers; pease in the garden are not doing so well. My cabbage, beets, and beans and onions are not looking so well. Half an acre of potatoes looking well. I planted four Englandish barleycorns. Them flower seeds you sent we grew. I am hobbing my calf. Dear father, brothers and sisters, we send these few lines to you hoping you are well.' . . . 'George lived with a gentleman for 16 dollars a month to work on his farm . . . (Others) are saving money to go on the land with. . . . Uncle George is living at Toronto; he has been up to see us, and to look for land; he found a lot to suit him; he was going to see the Governor to see if he could get it. . . . I have bought half an acre of land in the town of Bronti, which cost me nine pounds. It is a new town, and appears to be in a flourishing state; there has been 25 dwelling-houses and two large warehouses put up this season. . . . (I am) engaged for 100 dollars a year, free house, and fuel and board for myself, and an acre of ground to keep a cow in summer. . . . I bought a cow for 15 dollars.'

Hundreds of such unpolished letters crossed the Atlantic year by year; their writers were the human materials out of which the colony of Ontario was being built. Such were in essentials the materials by which the north-west provinces were populated in some decades later; such were the materials with which Australia was subsequently colonised.

There was nothing out of the ordinary in the character of these men. They often lamented leaving their old homes; their wives, we are told, sometimes complained bitterly that 'they could not go shopping on Saturday nights and gossip with neighbours; in the bush they were just dead-alive.'

Plain and simple sons of the soil, with little education, with few words in which to express their thoughts, they were

such as one may meet to-day in any county of Britain. Physically strong and mentally dogged, their talk was commonplace, their interests were limited; only their lives were heroic, with a rude dumb heroism that faces the unknown and wrestles for the victory. They had nothing of the adventurer in their texture; they would never have roamed the waters with a Drake or explored a continent with a Mackenzie; they had none of the wanderer's lust of change, and they settled where they planted.

They went to build a home and not a nation; unconsciously they laid the foundations of both.

It was through the lack of such men as these to people their colonies that other empires had often lost their oversea possessions. Spain and Portugal, France and Holland had, indeed, been rich in adventurers to carry their flags into every corner of the wide world. Vasco da Gama, Cortes, Cartier and Van Tromp could challenge comparison with any English sea-kings. But no other nation save Britain had sent out hundreds of its own people year by year to lay the foundations of its empire in the outer world; no other nation had directed a steady human stream to fertilise the wilderness: and no other nation founded in like degree younger nations of its own kin outside Europe.

After Canada had been occupied during eighty years by the French, the population of the province of Quebec had not reached 12,000; yet Ontario, which in 1783 had been one vast uninhabited wilderness, contained 374,099 persons in 1835. Every year over one thousand British immigrants sailed up the St. Lawrence; the rapid growth of a township or city was sometimes extraordinary. A district which had been impenetrable forest in 1816 supported 10,000 inhabitants eleven years later; and this instance was typical of many others.

The departure of so great a multitude of men from the motherland was some loss to rural Britain, whose peasantry

was now drained by a double exodus to the manufacturing towns at home and to the colonies overseas; but their arrival in America was the making of Canada. Those thousands of undistinguished settlers in Ontario, hardly any of whom have left a name known beyond the borders of their own province, were in fact, if not in intention, the fathers of the Canadian nation.

The usual cost of emigration from Britain to Ontario was about £20 a man.[1] This sum was either advanced to the intending settler as a gift or loan before he left his native place, or his fare was paid for him. Many of the families were absolutely destitute on their arrival in Canada; and if they did not obtain employment at once, their condition was miserable indeed.[2]

But wages were good when work was found, and it was not difficult for an industrious labourer to save money enough to pay for a grant of land, and to maintain himself until the first crops appeared. Yet the shifts to which some were put in their poverty may be realised from the statement that 'in the spring some immigrants hired from a farmer the use of a cow in calf for twenty shillings, and they kept the cow till the following spring, on account of her calf; and they then returned her in calf to the farmer, as they had received her; the calf which they had thus acquired soon became a cow, and had calves which they reared and thus acquired cattle.'[3]

The Land Question.

It was the natural ideal of every immigrant to possess his own farm; and few among those who sailed up the St. Lawrence filled with the hope of finding a new career in a new country had come without the intention of taking up land. Without land, indeed, they

[1] In 1906, when steamship and railway had revolutionised travel, the emigrant's summer fare from London to Winnipeg was only £8.

[2] There is much evidence as to the misery of the emigrants on landing at Quebec in the Durham *Report*.

[3] Strachan's *Remarks on Emigration*.

might be immigrants but they could not be settlers ; without land the independence which they sought would be a mocking dream. It was the promise of land and all that land implied which brought most of these men to Canada ; it was the possession of land which in the long-run kept them there.

Land was, indeed, available in Quebec as in Ontario. There were millions of spare acres in French as in English Canada ; and the system of tenure was not hard. The French Government had never exacted the full dues from the proprietors. The *seigneurs* had seldom been grasping in their treatment of the peasants,[1] and little change had taken place under English rule. But if the system of land tenure in Quebec was not hard, it was novel to British settlers ; and the vast majority of English immigrants preferred the grant of land on the more familiar terms of free and common soccage which prevailed in Ontario as at home.

There were, it is true, grave abuses connected with the system of granting lands to settlers in Ontario ; and those abuses had much to do with the discontent that eventually led to the rebellion of 1837. The surveys of the province were extremely inaccurate ; this defect led to much confusion, and to long and costly disputes as to the titles to the various allotments. Large districts had been set aside by law as clergy reserves, and in these there was no attempt at settlement or cultivation. There was ' gross favouritism in the disposal of lands ' in every part of the province [2] :

[1] They had been far more grasping in France itself ; see, for instance, the examples cited in Kropotkin's *Great French Revolution.*

[2] See the Durham *Report.* There is also much evidence in the Reports on the Settlement of Crown Lands in Lower Canada. The committee discovered the existence of ' innumerable frauds ' and much gambling in waste lands. A quit-rent was recommended to stop speculation ; but colonial opinion was always sharply opposed to its imposition. It was reported that the lack of roads in Quebec province retarded settlement there as everywhere else ; but it may be noted (Sixth Report) that a colony of English military settlers, consisting of 1307 men, 509 women, and 1001 children, was founded at this period in the French province.

some men were allowed to make enormous purchases which they could not develop by their own industry—one case is on record in which a solid block of one hundred thousand acres was granted to an individual applicant—while in other instances the legal formalities, which were insisted on before possession could be taken of an estate, were dragged out to an unconscionable length. The shortest period that is known to have elapsed between application for and the allotment of land, was six weeks ; the longest was no less than eight years.

But in general it was not difficult to obtain land from the Government in either colony ; and once it was obtained, the process of settlement was simple. When the intending farmer had received his grant and paid the small registration fee due to the Crown, he entered immediately into possession of a tract of primeval forest. His first business was to clear the soil of its virgin timber. The work of clearance was long and arduous, and seldom finished in one season ; but as each piece of ground was reclaimed from the forest it was sown with corn or maize or potatoes. The crop was generally good, for the soil was so fertile that manure was seldom necessary [1] ; and year by year a larger area of the grant would be brought under cultivation.

The rest was a matter of transport and price and market. Not until the era of railways and steamboats was there much opportunity for the Canadian farmer to export his surplus crops, and his position to that extent was limited. But the rapidly growing population of the British-American cities supplied the Ontarian agriculturist with a profitable sale for his produce ; and in any case he and his family could support themselves comfortably after a few years' residence in the colony.

No great fortunes were amassed, but a general level of competence prevailed ; and for long Ontario contained neither rich nor poor within its borders. All alike worked

[1] Conant's *Life in Canada.*

hard for a living; and if the few who failed were either unlucky or undeserving, the majority who succeeded rose steadily but not very rapidly to easier circumstances.

The Settler's Home.

One of the earliest cares of the settler was naturally the building of his home. The northern climate rendered it necessary that the houses of Ontario should be substantially constructed, but the first dwelling of the pioneer farmer in the wilds seldom erred on the side of luxury. It was generally formed out of the timber which had grown on the estate: the wood was split or sawn into logs or planks; and these, nailed roughly together, supplied the roofs and walls of the house. Inequalities in the surface were filled with moss or small faggots to keep out the rain; the earth formed the floor. The furniture, like the house itself, was made from the timber which the estate supplied; both were sufficiently rough.

Accommodation and hospitality were necessarily limited. The house consisted of a living-room and one or two bedrooms, perhaps with a store or shed attached; and those articles which could not be made at home, such as cups, knives, and blankets, were either brought from England or purchased in the nearest Canadian city.

If things prospered, a more ambitious residence replaced the log-hut within a year or two. A comfortable dwelling would now be erected, which in design would follow the plan of an English farmhouse, or introduce the modifications usual in America if the settler were of American origin. The original hut would in future be used as a barn or outhouse; and within a decade the penniless immigrant would thus have developed into a substantial farmer, self-reliant, thrifty, and independent.

Such were the beginnings of farming and agriculture in Ontario; the foundation of the towns followed on parallel lines. The virgin timber which was cleared off new plantations by the settlers was sold whenever possible. A saw-

mill would be erected on some likely spot beside one of the innumerable streams of the country; hither the logs were brought to be cut into lengths. Labourers soon gathered round the mill, rough plank houses being put up to accommodate them; a store for groceries and the other wants of the neighbourhood would now be established. The next requisite was a tavern, where the affairs of the district were discussed amid copious draughts by immigrants who had not forgotten their love of politics and liquor: some time later, a chapel and a school would be erected.

The Towns.

In this way arose many little centres of life in the colony; and the story might be repeated indefinitely throughout the West.[1] It was noticed that the old settlers on the land in Ontario seldom deserted their estates; and their lifelong residence in the province added to the stability of its early institutions.[2] But the towns were of necessity subject to greater changes. Some seemingly flourishing communities were abandoned after a few years, their site having proved insufficiently convenient to the district; others found themselves outpaced by their rivals, and after a resistance more or less valiant gave up the struggle for independent existence; others, again, advanced quickly up to a point, and then suffered an unforeseen arrest in development, as the neighbourhood underwent a temporary check in prosperity, or traffic found a simpler road.

Certain cities already stood out prominently in the two provinces of Quebec and Ontario as centres of government and trade; but in no case had any large Canadian town been founded away from the St. Lawrence. The great water

[1] Durham complained that in Ontario there were 'many petty local centres, but no great local centre with which all the separate parts are connected.' The difficulty is not unusual in recently-founded communities.

[2] D'Arcy Boulton remarked (1805) that many settlers who originally gave only ten or twelve dollars for their land would in twelve or fourteen years have refused £300 for it.

highway of British America naturally drew to itself all the business of the colony; almost the whole urban population of Canada was centred either in Quebec, Three Rivers, or Montreal, the older cities, or in Toronto, Kingston, and Hamilton, the newer.

In the city of Quebec, which in the year 1831 contained 36,179 inhabitants, society was strictly divided into English and French sections, the latter being by far the more numerous. The English residents were either commercial or military men; the merchants attending to their business in summer, and spending the leisure hours of the long gay winter in dancing or dining, according to their taste. The French consisted mainly of the old settlers, *seigneurs* and traders who had not left at the cession of the country to the British. The two nationalities did not mix in public life more than was necessary, and in private life hardly at all; but the invisible barriers which custom and language had erected between them were not necessarily always a proof of social enmity. **The City of Quebec.**

The streets both here and in Three Rivers—a city which was noted both for its ironworks and its fleas[1]—were unpaved; but the houses were solidly built of stone, which helped to make them comfortably warm within, but rendered them somewhat heavy and forbidding in external appearance.

The universal testimony of travellers admits that during this period Montreal presented a dismal and gloomy aspect. One visitor compared the place to a vast prison; another was reminded by its sight of Dead Sea fruit. The streets were narrow, the houses heavy and substantial, mostly built of stone and covered with ugly iron shutters to prevent damage by fire. **Montreal.**

But Montreal was far richer than Quebec, thanks mainly to the fact that it was the centre of the profitable fur trade

[1] The ironworks were founded by the French in 1737. I cannot ascertain the date of origin of the other commodity of Three Rivers.

with the West; yet living, apart from house-rent, was cheap in both places. It was growing steadily in size; in the year 1790 the population was only 18,000; by 1822 it had more than doubled its inhabitants; and in 1831 it had reached 43,773.

The aboriginal redskin still paraded the streets; but it was already seen that Montreal must become 'the emporium of the northern world'[1]; and the wealthy merchants who dwelt there entertained lavishly and hospitably, in the winter at their town houses in the best quarters of Montreal City, and in summer at their country residences in the neighbourhood.[2]

The cities of Ontario were still so young that most of their inhabitants could remember their foundation. They were compensated for the lack of an historic past by an ardent and not unfounded belief in their future; and as in the far west of Canada in the early twentieth century, the people thought little of annals which they had themselves seen in the making, while they looked forward with joy to prosperity and maturity in their later years.

Toronto.

Toronto, the chief city of Upper Canada, was by no means an attractive place in its early days. The site, on low marshy ground, was unhealthy, and more suitable, said one disgusted traveller, for frogs than human beings. The streets were always muddy and dirty, the houses poor and ill-built; and the people, in the opinion of a lady who visited the settlement, had all the vices of a petty colonial oligarchy.[3]

Kingston, on the other hand, was described as 'a very neat

[1] Anonymous MSS. in Royal Colonial Institute. *Sketch of Montreal*, 1806.

[2] An American visitor, Sansom, about this time predicted that the French population of Montreal would gradually be assimilated by the English, and Ontario become Americanised. It is one of the minor functions of the historian to demonstrate that prophecy is a hazardous trade.

[3] The place had been called York by its founder, but after a while it reverted to the more sonorous aboriginal title.

and tolerably well-built city' so early as the year 1805. It was on the site of the old French Fort Frontenac, but apparently it possessed little to distinguish it from the other rising towns of Ontario.

A small German settlement had also been founded at Berlin; and its people, who were not without enterprise, already possessed a newspaper which was published in their own language.

Sports and pastimes occupied some of the time, and much of the attention, of the people, in both provinces[1]; but neither Upper nor Lower Canada was remarkable for its culture. The city of Quebec possessed only a small library with a few books; four weekly newspapers, however, were issued there, and two from Montreal.

Social Life in Ontario.

An interest in art had hardly yet been born in the Canadian colonies; but two music-masters lived in Quebec, and it may be assumed that they were not wholly without pupils. No original work, however, had been produced in painting, sculpture, or music, and little that was of any value in literature. The whole community, indeed, still lived too close to the hard facts of life, and was too thoroughly engrossed in the primary toil for subsistence, to spare much time for the pursuit of intellectual culture.

It is not difficult to ascertain the social condition of the people of Ontario. Nearly all were recent immigrants from Britain or Loyalist refugees from the United States; and few had lost the habits which distinguished them in earlier years. It was said, indeed, by one critic that 'the Anglo-Canadian copied the worst and most prominent features in the American character,'[2] and complaints were made that the English immigrants exchanged their old, respectful demeanour for upstart insolence.

The judgment was probably too severe in many cases; but

[1] The first horse-race was run at Quebec in 1807.
[2] *Six Years in the Bush.*

it may be admitted that muscles rather than manners were valued in the bush. And the unwonted freedom of those who were thus raised from a subordinate situation on an English farm to the independence of personal proprietorship in Ontario may sometimes have been the cause of boorish behaviour. Men who are conscious of the possession of new and unaccustomed dignities are often offensively self-assertive until habit wears off the novelty.

In general, however, there was little beyond the roughness which frequently stamps the sons of the soil; and the letters which have been preserved from the British emigrants to Canada show that honest hearts were as plentiful in Ontario as in Sussex or the Lothians. There was certainly little foundation for the statement of one visitor that the people were 'depraved, ignorant, and inquisitive,' at once avaricious and inhospitable. Ignorant perhaps they were, since they had come from an England which did not yet consider education a national duty; but it was admitted that they knew far more about their own business of farming than their French neighbours in Quebec. Curious they may have been, but curiosity is no crime. And the charge of avarice was probably due to the simple fact that most of the settlers were forced to exercise a good deal of thrift to pay their way at all. They would have been hospitable had they possessed the wherewithal; but the early years of a poor pioneer in Ontario left little room for the arts and graces of a more leisured and wealthy community. When the conditions of life became easier, British Canadians showed themselves not one whit behind others in their appreciation of social pleasures and amusements.

A suggestion was made by some austere critics that the sexual morals of the first Ontarians were no more pleasing than their manners. The Canadian females, remarked Talbot, are 'children to-day, women to-morrow, wives the next day, and frequently mothers ere the week expires';

and other travellers occasionally advanced a general charge of dissolute living against the people. The accusation seems to have been grossly exaggerated, if not actually unfounded.

It is true that the virtue of woman is no more immaculate in the backwoods than in a great city. But in a new country, where men are in a large majority, there is a general tendency to treat the female sex with enhanced respect; and the evidence is altogether insufficient[1] to establish any charge of extensive immorality against the hard-working wives and daughters of the pioneer settlers in the bush. They appear on the whole to have been no better and no worse than their sisters in England. And although the marriage ceremony was occasionally dispensed with by too hasty lovers, since it was not always easy to find a magistrate or a clergyman to solemnise the union, the omission seems generally to have been repaired at the earliest opportunity. There was probably not so much sexual vice in the whole of English-speaking America at this time as in the single city of London; and the testimony of another traveller is emphatic that the one immoral town on the continent was New Orleans.[2]

The prevailing religion of Ontario was Protestant Christianity, as that of Quebec was Catholic; but for a time at least the newer creed did not flourish so well as its rival. It was a common remark among travellers that crosses were conspicuous in Lower, and taverns in Upper, Canada; the faith of the British pioneers in Ontario was of that modest kind which must have been concealed in the heart, since it showed not itself in the building of churches.

The Religion of Ontario.

One-seventh of the land in the province had been reserved for the clergy; but in spite of the claim advanced on behalf

[1] In particular it may be noticed that the clergy of Ontario never hinted at anything of the kind. The Church is nearly always a ready censor of female immorality, and clerical silence on this point should be conclusive.

[2] Hodgson, *Letters*, 1824. The capital of Louisiana had seemingly not yet recovered from the evil habits of its early settlers. (Vol. i. bk. v. ch. iii.)

of the Church of England that the whole ecclesiastical endowment should be consecrated to its services, there could be no revenue from the virgin forest; and few of the Anglican clergy applied for, or were appointed to, a cure in the wilderness.

That splendid revival of the Church of England, which originated in Oxford University in the nineteenth century, and which led to the foundation of missions, churches, and bishopries throughout the entire English-speaking world, had not yet come; in extensive districts of Canada, wrote an Anglican parson who travelled through America at this time, there were neither churches nor clergy; and he noticed with regret that while the established faith had failed to carry on its work, the dissenting sects were everywhere more active.[1]

Those who had been Presbyterians in Britain remained Presbyterians in Canada. Those who had been Quakers in Britain remained Quakers in Canada. Those who had been Lutherans in Germany remained Lutherans in Canada. But many of the Episcopalians had become Methodists since they settled in Canada, less perhaps from any love of religious dissent than from the neglect of their own communion; and the Methodist ministers, who depended solely on the voluntary support of their congregations, now 'bore unlimited sway' in Ontario.

A few years later the warm blood of the Oxford Revival pulsed through the arteries of the Church of England, and once more the vigour of youth was seen in the work of that ancient confession. By 1838 there were seventy-three ordained clergy and ninety churches in Ontario, and there were estimated to be one hundred and fifty thousand members of the Anglican Church in the province.[2] It could now no longer be said, as visitors to Canada had said twenty years before, that

[1] Fidler's *Observations*.

[2] *Canadian Church Destitution*, by the Bishop of Montreal (1838). See also *The Church in Upper Canada*, by William Bettridge, D.D. (1838).

the Anglican cathedral of Quebec possessed neither organist nor choir; that the Anglican cathedral at Montreal would probably decay before it was finished[1]; that the Anglican Bishop of Quebec received a stipend of £3500 a year for preaching one sermon every six months, and that the errors of the Roman Catholic faith were neutralised by the personal faults of the Anglican clergy.[2]

A new spirit pervaded the work of the Church of England. Her priests were now active and devoted. They took part in the general life of the province; they ministered to the religious wants of the people, and discussed their social needs and opportunities.[3] They appealed for help in their work: 'were each communicant of the Church,' said the Bishop of Toronto in 1842, 'to devote only a few acres of his superfluous land to spiritual purposes, the independence of the Church would be secured'[4]; and help was ungrudgingly given, both by the missionary societies at home and by the settlers in Ontario.

But the revival had come too late. While the Anglican Church had slept, the dissenting Protestants had sown the seed of their faith; and they now gathered in the fruits of their work. To this day Ontario remains definitely Nonconformist in its belief. In the census of 1901 not more than seventeen per cent. of its inhabitants professed themselves members of the Anglican Church; thirty-six per cent. were Methodists and Baptists; twenty-two per cent. were Presbyterians—a figure which indicates with sufficient accuracy the numbers of the Scottish immigrants into the province; and some eighteen per cent. were Catholics.

Zeal rather than education accounted for the success of the earlier Nonconformists. They were men who were devoted to their religion; they were prepared to suffer hardships in

[1] Hall's *Travels*. [2] Lambert's *Travels*.

[3] See, for instance, *Remarks on Emigration from the United Kingdom*, by John Strachan, Archdeacon of York, Upper Canada.

[4] *Constitution and Objects of the Church Society of the Diocese of Toronto.*

order that the faith might be established in the wilds: but they were seldom possessed of much learning or capable of real thought. Scholars were not, indeed, greatly needed in the colony at the time; and the fact that the dissenting ministers who preached Christianity in early Ontario would have found it difficult to define their theology to the satisfaction of any European university, while their knowledge of literature did not extend beyond the Bible, was probably the least of their faults.[1] A certain narrowness of outlook, alike in temporal and spiritual affairs, and an ineradicable suspicion of anything beyond the rigid limits of their own religious faith, was a more serious drawback to the worth of their services.

These were the first generation of Christian pastors in Ontario. Their successors were better educated and not less fervent; while the Anglican communion also sent out some of its most devoted sons to preach the gospel in Canada. Every sect found a ready welcome, and it was noticed that the settlers would travel many miles along rough tracks to a distant church in order that they might not be left without religious instruction. But whatever the cause might be, Anglican episcopacy did not flourish in modern British America, as it had not flourished in any of the older colonies save Virginia and Maryland. The members of the Church of England never numbered so many as one in four of the people in any province of Canada, and their total numbers in 1901 were not one in eight; while the Dissenters numbered twenty-three, and the Presbyterians rather more than fifteen per cent.

Such were the two chief colonies of British North America during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Both were provincial in thought and character; but both were making steady material progress; and both were quietly prosperous.

[1] Some absurd anecdotes of their ignorance will be found in the old books of travel. They are hardly worth preserving.

It was inevitable that the Canadian provinces should be compared with other countries; and there was only one country with which the two Canadas could properly be compared. The imperial provinces of North America could only be contrasted with the revolted provinces of the empire; and while they could dispute the justice of comparison with other lands, they could not avoid the comparison with the United States.

Canada and the United States.

But from whatever point of view the comparison was made, it could hardly be pleasing to the patriotic Canadian to find that both Upper and Lower Canada were undeniably backward when their institutions, population, and general conditions of life were contrasted with those in the United States. Their inferiority could not, indeed, be disputed. One of the officials who served under Lord Durham in 1838 stated that he could always tell on which side of the frontier he was standing, by the obvious superiority of the United States in every respect. The value of land was one thousand per cent. higher in the republic than in Canada; and more than half the British immigrants into Ontario are said to have deserted that province for the better opportunities which offered further south.

The roads were extremely bad in both provinces; and while railways were rapidly being built in the United States, only fifteen miles of line existed in Canada in 1837.

The Canadian prisons were in a disgusting condition. There were no asylums for the poor and insane, and the doctors were mediocre. And the system of education was so bad that many of the British settlers in Ontario emigrated to the United States solely for the purpose of educating their children.

The securities for the maintenance of order, which were none too good in the United States, were absurdly inadequate in Canada. Even in the city of Quebec, the police were few in number; elsewhere in the country they did not exist at all.

'Beyond the walls of Quebec,' reported Lord Durham, 'all regular administration of the country appeared to cease. . . . In the rest of the province there was no sheriff, no mayor, no constable, no superior administrative officer of any kind. There were no country, no municipal, no parochial officers, either named by the Crown, or elected by the people.'

Some of these deficiencies were no doubt inevitable in a new country; but some were indicative of trouble in the future. And before many years had passed the trouble came.

CHAPTER IV

THROUGH STRIFE TOWARDS UNION: 1812-40[1]

A WISE policy had divided Ontario or Upper Canada from Quebec or Lower Canada in the year 1791; but political separation did not suffice to keep the two colonies in neighbourly friendship. A common detestation of the United States was their one point of agreement—for the passive loyalty of Quebec and the active loyalty of Ontario was no bond of union—and there were a thousand reasons for disagreement.

Ontario was rapidly outgrowing Quebec; yet Quebec, as the province nearer the sea, had the power of controlling the imports and exports of Ontario. And the British settlements

[1] Authorities.—The *Canadian War of* 1812, by Sir C. P. Lucas, is a careful and detailed account of the war with the United States. The war is also described with less impartiality by A. G. Bradley in *The Making of Canada*. Kingsford's great history of Canada is nowhere more valuable than in treating the rebellions of 1837. Durham's *Report*, which is more fully spoken of in the text, is essential for the racial quarrel in Quebec, and the political crisis in the other provinces. Stuart Reid's *Life of Lord Durham* is a useful biography of that statesman. There are numerous references to Durham in contemporary English political literature, many of which help towards a fuller comprehension of his character; some of these, however, being founded on hearsay and the spiteful gossip of his enemies, are untrustworthy.

were quick, progressive, and practical, with a keen eye to the material matters of life; the French, on the contrary, were quiet, steady, and conservative in all they did. They desired to keep things as they were, since they were satisfied with their lot and looked not to better their earthly portion; while the British were filled with the restless discontent of an intensely vital people, aiming at better houses, better farms, larger towns, more money, and greater power.

The French, as was natural with a race which had lost the greater part of its inheritance in America, dwelt mainly in the past; the British, as was natural with a race preparing for the conquest of the limitless West, dwelt mainly in the future. That past in which the French lived was one of many glories. It was adorned with bright names and brilliant deeds; but yet it was the past, and as such it ranked among the dead things of the earth. That future to which the British looked was, indeed, uncertain: its full possibilities were hardly suspected, even by those best acquainted with the soil and climate of the prairies. But yet it was the future, some part of whose promise might be realised by any settler who planted a farm or engaged in business in the rising cities of Ontario; and as such it was a direct inspiration and challenge.

Time and the steady flow of incoming population were on the side of the English in Canada; but another struggle was to be decided before they could obtain the secure possession of their American territories.

The social history of British America during the seventy years between the Canada Act of 1791 and the Dominion Act of 1867 contains, it is true, little save uninterrupted material advance. But while new cities and townships were being founded on every side, and the people progressed from poverty to comparative prosperity year by year, the political annals of the two colonies, on the other hand, were full of strife and disorder.

A foreign war and the threatened loss of independence menaced Canada from without; continual domestic friction, that ranged uneasily from bitter words to abortive rebellion, hampered her equable development within. And both troubles had their roots deep in the past: the former in the jealous hostile attitude towards Britain which had distinguished the United States since the older English colonies had seceded; the latter in that ancient enmity between French and British in Europe which had been transplanted to the new world by the emigrants of both countries.

Canada and the United States.

On every point save one, Ontario and Quebec were contrasted and divergent: on that one point, the determination to maintain their independence against the United States, they were united. Neither French nor British had forgotten the Imperial Civil War. The former detested the republicans who had tempted them to rebel, and invaded their territory. The latter hated those who had dispossessed them of their homes and driven them into exile. The bitter and well-founded enmity which the United Empire Loyalists felt for the United States was the main strength of British America; and that enmity, which was very far from extinct even in the third generation,[1] was only deepened by the aggressive policy of the republic towards its northern neighbour.

The Treaty of Versailles in 1783 had recognised the independence of the United States; it had not brought assured peace to America. For many years subsequently the Canadians feared the violation of their frontier; and they knew that they were powerless to resist invasion. 'The contempt with which this country is treated by the United States,' wrote Carleton, Lord Dorchester, in 1793, 'sufficiently

[1] The centenary celebrations of the Loyalists furnished sufficient evidence of a proposition that will not be disputed by anybody who has visited Canada.

evinces their knowledge of our impotent condition, and that we are abandoned to our feeble efforts for our preservation; and even these they seem to expect and require we should not employ.'

It was the steady aim, in fact, of a leading party in the United States to drive Britain out of America altogether; and that party looked upon the annexation of Canada in the near future as inevitable. It says little for their political sagacity that they expected to beguile the French, who distrusted them in Quebec, and the English, who disliked them in Ontario, by painting the benefits of absorption into the United States in crude but specious colours; yet the emissaries of the republic frequently displayed a disconcerting activity in the two colonies.

One manifesto, for instance, incited the French peasantry to throw off their allegiance to Britain, 'so long the seat of hypocrisy and imposture, despotism and cruelty. Canadians, arm yourselves, call your friends the Indians to your assistance, count on the sympathy of your neighbours!' The same document invited the settlers to form themselves into an 'independent nation in league with France and the United States.' That aspiration was to find some supporters in the rebellion of 1837, when a serious proposal was put forward to establish a French-Canadian nation; but as a whole the seed of sedition fell on barren soil.

Not many of the people of Lower Canada were willing to listen to such shoddy rhetoric; in the sister province of Upper Canada the United Empire Loyalists were resolutely true to Britain. Some anxiety was expressed lest the more recent arrivals in Ontario, whose immigration was due to personal interest rather than loyalty, should be attracted by exhortations to seek 'emancipation from tyranny and oppression, and restoration to the dignified station of freemen.' But in general, Canadian opinion was strongly in favour of British rule in both provinces; and the somewhat clumsy

baits of which the foregoing are typical examples met with a very chilling reception.[1]

That fact did not, however, disillusion those politicians in the United States who were determined to foment a war with Britain, in the expectation that, hard pressed as England was in Europe by the Napoleonic struggle, she would be forced to resign Canada as an easy prey in America. The war which broke out in the year 1812 was nominally caused by the desire to avenge the losses which the sea-borne commerce of the United States had suffered at the hands of Britain during the contest with France, and by the alleged incitement of the redskins against the United States on the part of the British in Ontario and Quebec ; in reality it was a war for the annexation of Canada.

The charge of fomenting attacks by the aborigines was utterly without foundation. On the other hand, the damage to the maritime trade of the republic had in fact been great, and the action of Britain in insisting on the right to search the neutral American ships for contraband articles had often been high-handed and arbitrary. But the losses had fallen mainly on the northern states of the union ; and although the New England merchants were intensely irritated at the capture of their vessels, they had no desire for an appeal to arms.

The southern states, however, had been strongly anti-British since the Imperial Civil War, and the bellicose sentiments of their more volatile people were easily influenced by the political leaders of the day. The Democratic party ruled the south ; and the foreign policy of the Democrats was based on an extravagant hatred of Great Britain.

[1] It is quite possible that the Americans sincerely believed these absurd charges of slavery and despotism. In making them, and in believing that their own institutions were the best in the world, they showed a strong family likeness to their English cousins, with whom it was an article of faith that every foreigner envied them the Habeas Corpus Act and trial by jury. Earnest politicians are not always gifted with a sense of humour.

After a double term of office as president, Thomas Jefferson had nominally become a private citizen once more; but no statesman who has held supreme rank in the national councils can altogether sink to the common level, even if he so desires; and Jefferson assuredly had no wish to lose one iota of his power. It was natural that none should speak with more authority in the United States than the Virginian ex-president who had been one of the fathers of the revolution and the author of the Declaration of Independence; and Jefferson was an avowed and constant enemy of Britain. His successor, James Madison, who was elected to the presidency in 1809, was less violent in his views; but he, too, was a Democrat, and largely swayed by men like Jefferson and Henry Clay. And the latter, a lawyer from the youthful district of Kentucky, now better remembered for having given his name to an excellent cigar than as a politician of some ability and inexhaustible invective, was an even more insistent advocate of hostilities than Jefferson.

Both knew that Britain was fighting for her very existence against Napoleon, and that she could not on that account put forward her full strength to defend her western colonies; neither believed that those colonies possessed any independent power of resistance. The time therefore seemed ripe, and the occasion favourable, for driving Britain from America; and Clay boasted that the backwoodsmen of Kentucky were equal to the conquest of Canada, without any assistance from the other states.

Severely taxed as Britain was with the deadly struggle in Europe, she was not inclined to devote much attention to the demands of American politicians at Washington. After some delay she gave proof, indeed, of her desire to treat the United States fairly by withdrawing, on 23rd June 1812, those Orders in Council which had resulted in the seizure of so many American ships. The War of 1812.

But her statesmen had spoken contemptuously of the

republic in Parliament, and the words were not forgotten on the other side of the Atlantic. And in any case the concession came too late; war had already been declared by the United States Senate five days before the Orders in Council had been withdrawn; and the news that the chief cause of dispute was removed did not induce those who anticipated the easy conquest of Canada to take any steps towards a renewal of peace.

The tedious and indifferently waged war which followed lasted three years. The Canadians remained obstinately deaf to all invitations to rebel against the slavery of subjection to the British Crown; but to the astonishment of the whole world, the English fleet was repeatedly worsted at sea by the United States navy in a series of petty engagements. And to the astonishment of the Democrats, the Canadians succeeded in defending themselves against a far more numerous army than that of the Kentucky pioneers.

Yet the colonial militia was miserably weak. Despite the warnings of successive governors, the defences of Ontario and Quebec had long been neglected. More than two decades previously Carleton had told the imperial authorities that 'a people so disused to military service (as the French Canadians) for twenty-seven years do not willingly take up the firelock and march to the frontier when their passions are not strongly agitated'; yet since that time nothing had been done to train them. And in Ontario a new generation had grown up since the coming of the Loyalists—a generation that knew not war.

But the United States were faced by equal difficulties. Massachusetts and Connecticut had protested vigorously against the war [1]; they now refused to grant supplies or to

[1] A New Englander spoke of the invasion of Canada as 'a cruel, wanton, senseless and wicked attack, in which neither plunder nor glory were to be gained, upon an unoffending people, bound to us by ties of blood and good neighbourhood, undertaken for the punishment over their shoulders of another people three thousand miles away by young

furnish troops. And without the wealth and vigour of New England at their back the southern states possessed but little power. Their troops were undisciplined. Their generals were utterly incompetent. The road to Canada was long and difficult; and the initial advantages of the campaign were gained by the British colonists under Isaac Brock. Inspirited by his success, the people of both the Canadian provinces were now eager to resist the invaders. A notable victory over the republicans was won at Queenston Heights on 13th October 1812; and although Brock lost his life in the battle, his death could not depress the ardour of the Canadians.

The Invasion of Canada, 1812-4.

In the following year the United States met with some temporary successes. The British squadron on Lakes Erie and Ontario was repulsed, and Upper Canada was invaded. A series of raids ensued, in which considerable damage was done to colonial farms and townships; and during the campaign the republicans attacked the rising city of Toronto, at that time a place of some seven hundred inhabitants. The capital of the province only capitulated after considerable resistance on 27th April; but an act of wanton folly on the part of the invading troops created a feeling of exasperation throughout British America that did not die down for many a long year.

The Burning of Toronto, 1813.

The public buildings of Toronto were burnt by the invaders; the parliament, the library, and the public records were destroyed; the church plate and the books in the town library were carried off, together with much private property. Some of the booty was subsequently returned by the commander of the United States troops, who thus made such honourable

politicians, fluttering and cackling on the floor of the House, half-hatched, the shell still on their heads and their pin-feathers not yet shed; politicians to whom reason, justice, pity, were nothing, revenge everything.'—Josiah Quincey in Congress; quoted by A. G. Bradley in *The Making of Canada*. The political vocabulary of the English people overseas has always been as noted for its virility as that of the nation from which they have sprung.

reparation as lay in his power. But the damage was nevertheless great; and from a military as well as an international standpoint, the burning of Toronto was indefensible.

No attempt was made to hold the town, which would have been an important centre from which the rest of the province might have been reduced: and the remainder of the summer passed in little more than a series of raids, which annoyed the Canadians, but did nothing to advance the cause of the United States. The close of the year found the situation essentially the same as it had been at the beginning of the campaign. An attack on the province of Quebec was repulsed; and the republicans had again been driven out of Ontario.

Dissatisfaction in New England was now greater than ever, but the southern states were still resolute; and operations opened in 1814 with a fresh invasion of Upper Canada. The British forces were severely beaten at Chippewa, but the republicans were themselves defeated a few weeks later; and the British Government, now at last freed from its anxieties in Europe by the fall of Napoleon, prepared a general attack on the United States. A large force was landed in the Potomac, the city of Washington was captured, and its public buildings burnt to the ground. The destruction of Toronto was thus signally avenged[1]; but two other British expeditions, which were intended to march through the United States from south to north and from north to south, failed altogether to achieve their object.

End of the War, 1814.

By this time, however, both sides were tired of a contest

[1] The destruction of Washington was severely reprobated by the annalists of the United States, and their condemnation ratified by many English writers; even good historians were apparently unaware of the provocation received. In particular, J. R. Green's account of the war is prejudiced and inaccurate. The British were in no mood to act on the Baconian principle that revenge degrades the avenger to the level of his adversary; and the destruction of Washington had its significance as showing that an injury to a British colony would be resented by the Imperial Government.

from which neither could derive territory or glory. It was evident that the southern states alone could not conquer Canada. New England was less likely than ever to lend them assistance. And Britain had no desire, even if she had possessed the power, to subdue her old colonies. Negotiations for peace had already begun; and the Treaty of Ghent in 1814 brought the struggle to a close.

The war thus ended was the last between Britain and the United States; but ill-feeling long continued, and in some degree still continues, on both sides, a perpetual legacy from the past, a perpetual danger for the future. For some years after the peace of 1814, the British Minister at Washington was liable to be insulted in the streets[1]; and there was always an active feeling of enmity to Britain in the United States. The foreign policy of the Democratic party was admittedly based on hatred of Britain; and while the Democrats still ruled the southern states, and through the south the whole union, there could be no real friendship between Empire and Republic. The late war had proved that the Democrats would seek every opportunity of embarrassing the country which had given birth to their nation. They had been willing to unite with Napoleon, the most deadly foe of Britain, in order to humble her; they had joined the circle of Britain's enemies in her hour of greatest need. And though their designs on Canada had failed, there was no evidence that they would not again seize the opportunity of reopening a quarrel whose memory they were determined not to forget.[2]

But Ill-feeling continues.

[1] 'Travelling is detestable in this country unless one travels in a gig or on horseback by oneself, and can learn to dispense with separate bed and board, which the English Minister cannot do if he were so minded, as he would be exposed to have many disagreeable things said to him in public.'—Bagot, British Minister at Washington, 24th Oct. 1816.

[2] 'All the young generation, nearly without exception, are of the Democratic party, the creed of which, being hatred of England, leads them to reject as much as they can what they conceive to be an English usage.'—Bagot, 1818.

The dislike was now reciprocal between the two nations. If the American Democrats hated England, the English Tories hated the whole American people without distinction of party. A large body of politicians in Britain lost few opportunities of venting their dislike; their activity was alluded to by Macaulay as 'that pitiful affectation of contempt by which some . . . have done more than wars or tariffs can do to excite mutual enmity between two communities formed for friendship.' William Wilberforce likewise 'grieved over the hostile spirit so generally diffused in each country against the other; there are fermenting those bad passions, the too natural issues of which would be another war.' And Nathaniel Hawthorne, the American novelist, who occupied an official position in England, again noticed the aversion twenty years later. 'We talked,' he wrote in his diary, 'about England and America, and the nature and depth of their mutual dislike; and of course the slavery question came up, as it always does in one way or another.' He thought worthy of mention 'the only Englishman who fairly acknowledged that the English cherish doubt, jealousy, suspicion, in short, an unfriendly feeling, towards the Americans'; and even Hawthorne, the gentlest of mortals, was once provoked to say that he would 'never love England till she sued to us for help.'[1] In the same period the description of western institutions that Dickens gave in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and again in *American Notes for General Circulation*, accentuated the ill-will; the more generally favourable verdicts of Thackeray and Trollope attracted less attention.

The majority of Englishmen remained, in fact, profoundly ignorant of, and profoundly indifferent to, affairs in America. It was the fashion to regard the United States as an upstart; and the feeling of chagrin at the revolt of the old colonies

[1] But at the close of Hawthorne's residence in England the motherland had gained his love, for he wrote in one of the last entries in his diary, 'What a wonderful land! It is our forefathers' land; our land, for I will not give up such a precious inheritance.'

was probably deepened by resentment that they should prosper better without the parental guidance than in the days of tutelage. On the other hand, those British travellers who crossed the Atlantic not infrequently returned disgusted by the rawness and incompleteness that is inseparable from the development of a new land. They contrasted the flux of life, the continual movement westward, the restless emigration, the mushroom towns, the railroads that soon began to push forward into the unknown, the giant commercial enterprises, colossal in their size and often in their instability, with the ordered existence and institutions of England. They forgot that civilisation is not ready-made. They saw only the dollars and the talk of dollars; they forgot that this was the machinery with which the republic advanced. They were destitute of the larger vision which could find grandeur in the reclamation of the enormous territories that had been the immemorial haunt of the savage, the bison, and the bear. They could not discover, beneath the rough exterior, the coarse clothing, the terrific oaths and the lawlessness of the American pioneers, as true a manhood as had existed in ancient Rome, or as still existed in the modern expansion of Britain.

The enmity between empire and republic was of profound significance in the politics of the world, the rest of which beheld not without joy a race divided against itself; but for the moment we are concerned only with its local effect on Canada. And Canada had deeper reason to resent the action of the United States than even Britain.

The rapid growth of the republic was in itself a danger to the colony. The policy which the statesmen of Washington chose to pursue in their dealings with British America—a policy at once contemptuous, threatening, and injurious—was such as to aggravate and alienate the Canadians still further. They were taunted by their neighbours with their weakness and lack of ability to defend a frontier of enormous

length. They were threatened with annexation against their will, and at the same time warned that they would be wise in their own interests to secede from the empire and to join the republic. They were ridiculed for adherence to monarchical institutions, and derided for their loyalty.

Such derision and such taunts could only embitter Canada still more against the United States. The constant menace on their southern frontier maintained unimpaired the enmity of the colonists to the republic and their steady fealty to Britain. But although the lamp of loyalty burnt brightly on the shores of the St. Lawrence, the need for union against the United States could not keep Ontario and Quebec at peace. The divergences of race and religion, of origin, character and interest, were too great; and these were unhappily emphasised by the constitutional difficulties which now arose out of the Canada Act of 1791. For a time, indeed, it seemed that British North America was destined to form a collection of discordant and divided provinces instead of developing into one united nation.

Internal Friction in British America, 1815-36.

The real weakness of the country lay in the domestic friction that was only overcome half a century later when federation was accomplished: the internal troubles through which the two Canadas passed during the years that followed the war of 1812 were, in fact, the inevitable pains which attend the growth of isolated communities into a single people. The unconscious striving to build up a nation out of scattered and frequently unfriendly settlements is one that characterises all civilisation; the synthetic movement, which soon made itself felt in Canada, was in essentials the same movement through which England had passed when the original provinces of the heptarchy were welded into one kingdom; it was in essentials the same movement through which the United States were passing between the Declaration of Independence and the second civil war in 1861; it was the same movement through which Australia and British South Africa

were likewise to pass, the former by means of a peaceful political discussion, the latter after prolonged enmity between Boer and Briton and a three years' war.

But during these years it seemed at times that the forces which made for separation and even for anarchy in British North America were more potent than those which made for union. And the forces of disorder and discontent were gaining strength, unchecked and uncontrolled by the Imperial Government, unknown and unsuspected by the English people in England.

Canadian affairs were, indeed, consistently neglected by the imperial authorities at this period, nor was it wonderful that such should be the case. Superficially, all seemed well in those distant dependencies; and Britain was then fully occupied with the industrial distress and the agitation for political reform which followed the close of the Napoleonic war at home, while the unstable situation on the European continent diverted attention still further from colonial affairs. Once only, in 1822, did a dispute between Ontario and Quebec engage the attention of the Imperial Government; but when that difficulty was apparently settled by a compromise, nothing more was heard of British America outside the dingy walls of the Colonial Office until the rebellions of 1837 demanded prompt and decisive action.

Yet the difficulties in Canada were steadily growing more acute. Those difficulties were of a twofold nature, racial and constitutional, the former affecting Quebec directly and Ontario indirectly; the latter affecting every British settlement in North America from the great lakes to Newfoundland.

Time had increased rather than diminished the enmity between French and English in Lower Canada. In the early years of British America there had been, it is true, considerable ill-feeling between the two races. The demands of the few English settlers in Quebec for exclusive privileges had been as preposterously

1. The Racial Problem.

large as their numbers were ridiculously small. But the British Government had treated its new French subjects fairly and even generously; the latter possessed an enormous numerical preponderance in the province; and for many years after the Quebec Act of 1774 there was little friction between the disappointed English minority and the not dissatisfied French majority. And the immigration of the United Empire Loyalists made apparently little difference to Quebec, for the bulk of these new settlers preferred to establish a purely English colony after their own fashion in Upper Canada, rather than make their homes in a land so strongly French in its characteristics as Lower Canada. A few, indeed, of the English refugees settled in Quebec. But some of those who did so intermarried with the French; and their children, who frequently adopted the dominant tongue, became within a few years indistinguishable from their neighbours. It was not from such materials that a racial quarrel could arise.

More recently, however, the situation had changed considerably. The tide of English immigration, which now began to flow steadily towards America, had in time left its mark upon the province of Quebec. The French Canadians could no longer repose easily in the comfortable conviction that their preponderance within the colony was secure. It is true that the English were still in a large minority. But what they lacked in quantity they more than equalised in quality.

They possessed greater aptitude for business than the French Canadians. The new-comers were more industrious, more enterprising, and better educated than the older inhabitants; within a few years they dominated both the trade and the agriculture of the province. They founded new industries in the cities. They proved far better farmers than the ignorant French peasants on the land. They purchased the estates of the old French proprietors. They employed the poorer French Canadians as labourers on their

farms, and as workmen in the cities; and by the year 1837 'the entire wholesale, and a large portion of the retail trade of Lower Canada, with the most profitable and flourishing farms,' had passed 'into the hands of the numerical minority of the population.'[1]

So complete an industrial conquest by strangers would have caused jealousy in any country in the world; in Quebec, where the strangers were likewise foreigners, it produced a racial bitterness that speedily developed into a crisis and a rebellion.

Old feelings of national enmity quickly revived under the pressure of commercial defeat. The French were alarmed and jealous of their successful rivals; the English were arrogant and scornful of those whom they had displaced. And the division between the two peoples was now more strongly accentuated than ever before. Society was organised into national camps. Intermarriage between the races practically ceased; the French and English, who were forced to live side by side in town and country, no longer associated with each other in any capacity. Religious dissensions were, indeed, happily absent, although the French were mainly Catholics and the English mainly Protestants; but in every other respect the two were openly opposed.

The Press on either side lent its aid to exacerbate the strife; and the quarrel was sometimes carried to extravagant or petty lengths. The one general means of communication within the colony was the St. Lawrence; but the French made it a point of honour not to travel in an English vessel; the English followed suit by refusing to use the rival French line.

At the meetings of the Quebec Agricultural Association, the French farmers would not compete with the English:

[1] Lord Durham's *Report*. A fairly close parallel might be drawn between the situation in Lower Canada at this time and that in some parts of South Africa half a century later.

distinct prizes were given to French and English entrants; even 'the national ploughing-matches were carried on in separate and distant fields.'[1] The charities of the province were administered on racial lines; everywhere the two peoples refused to co-operate. 'The only public occasion on which they ever met was in the jury-box; and they met there only to the utter obstruction of justice.'[2] In such circumstances there could be no legal security, for no French jury would convict a Frenchman or acquit an Englishman; no English jury would convict an Englishman or acquit a Frenchman. And on one occasion when there were six French and six English jurymen in the box, the foreman gave as the one reason why they would never be able to agree on a verdict the fact that the two races were equal in numbers.

Racial antagonism grew more acute every day; but in its earlier stages the quarrel was masked under the ordinary forms of political warfare. The English demanded that great public works should be carried out in the province, that roads should be constructed, bridges built, and the whole country surveyed and developed. But although they possessed the advantage in the Legislative Council, they were in a minority in the Assembly of Lower Canada; and the French majority took good care to oppose all such demands with a constant veto. Here at least they were successful in their aim; and if they could not expel the English who were already in the province, the political deadlock which they brought about kept new English immigrants from arriving.

Neither capital nor labour would adventure itself in a land where improvements were obstructed and progress was designedly opposed by its inhabitants; and the number of English immigrants who landed at Quebec dropped from 52,000 in 1832 to less than 5000 in 1838. The value of property fell, and the public revenue declined when these tactics were put in force; but those were matters of which

[1] The Durham *Report*. [2] *Ibid.*

the French Canadians recked little, so long as they could by this means defeat in the political arena those English competitors who had already defeated them in the industrial. The machinery of representative government, which the imperial authorities had given to Quebec in all good faith, and far in advance of any popular demand, was now turned against British interests; and a constitutional difficulty was thereby added to the racial crisis.

But the constitutional difficulty in Canada was of fundamentally different origin; and it affected the newer English colonies at least as prejudicially as the old French province.

2. The Constitutional Problem.

The Canada Act of 1791 had professed to give British America, in the words of Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe, a constitution 'the very image and transcript of that of Great Britain'; it had in effect given something altogether different. The English colonies, reported the High Commissioner who investigated their grievances in 1838, possessed but 'the mockeries, the shadows of English institutions, not the realities; the names, not the substances: a magistracy composed of the worst material, some hardly able to write, administering justice, or rather injustice, according to their private interests; juries perjuring themselves; classes and parties protecting themselves by political associations, and the Government dependent on the House of Assembly or the Legislature for financial support, alternately the slave of one or the other.'[1]

The indictment was not too strong for a system which had caused continual friction and intense discontent in every province of British America, in Quebec, in Ontario, in the maritime provinces, and in Newfoundland. In passing the Canada Act of 1791, by which political constitutions had been given to the American colonies, the imperial authorities had, indeed, been actuated by the best intentions. But intentions

[1] Durham to Melbourne, 17th July 1838.

count for little in a world impatient of all save the immediate fact; and although the first constitutions had been not unsuited to the needs of the Canadian provinces during the early years of their operation, the limited powers which those constitutions conferred had in course of time proved both inadequate and irritating.

In every country it is an essential condition of progress that its administration should be both stable and permanent; in a new and undeveloped land the continuity of government is of even greater importance than elsewhere. The imperial authorities were therefore well advised to maintain control over the colonial governments during the early years of British North America. When a constitution was granted to Ontario in 1791, that province was still a wilderness; and while it was wise to introduce some measure of popular government in an English community from the very beginning, it would have been unwise to give an infant people uncontrolled power over their destinies. Had the Government of Upper Canada been elected by the settlers when its townships and homesteads were still in embryo, it may be doubted whether the colony would have progressed as steadily as it did under Simcoe, and whether it would have been as successful as it was in combating the invasions of 1812 and the subsequent years.

But whatever may have been the case in the purely English community of Upper Canada, it would have been absurd to grant full responsible institutions to Lower Canada. The French inhabitants of that province knew nothing of popular government, nor had they any desire for a system of which they were entirely ignorant. The utter lack of education and of thoughtful public opinion must have rendered complete local rule a farce. And in any event the imperial authorities may well have doubted the expediency of granting the full privileges of British citizenship to an alien people. Yet with a liberality for which they deserve all praise, they

had given the French in Quebec the same constitution which the English possessed in Ontario, in order to train the new subjects of the empire in those methods of popular rule which prevailed in every English community at home and overseas.

The recognition that a child has certain rights is by no means tantamount to an admission that he should immediately receive the full privileges of the adult: nevertheless it implies that he will be granted those full privileges when he is of age. The British-American colonies had come of age; but they still possessed little more than the rights of children. The Canada Act of 1791 had served its purpose; it now required extension in the direction of granting greater powers of self-government to the colonies. But it does not appear that the imperial authorities contemplated any such extension, either in Quebec or in the other provincial parliaments; and from that fact much of the existing difficulty had arisen.

The colonial franchise was, indeed, far more comprehensive than that which prevailed in Britain. But the powers of the colonial Assemblies were far smaller than those of the mother of parliaments. An adverse vote on an important division at Westminster caused the immediate resignation of the Cabinet; an adverse vote in the Assembly at Quebec or Toronto merely caused the abandonment of the particular Bill upon which the vote was taken. The anomalous position thus resulted that, while the people and the electoral system in the colonies were more democratic than in Britain, the administration was less democratic.

Yet it was hardly probable that the large and influential number of British politicians who had not permitted the first English Reform Bill to pass into law until 1832, and who were, moreover, profoundly impressed with the conviction that the democracies in the revolted English colonies had been allowed altogether too free a hand, would willingly

assent to the extension of self-government without very definite reasons for the step. Those reasons were soon to be supplied.

The experience of forty years had proved that there were grave defects in a system which gave representative and not responsible government. And those defects were inherent in the system itself: they could not be assigned to local causes of disturbance, for they had appeared in greater or less degree wherever the system had been introduced.[1] With an executive that is irremovable by the popular vote, the administration will, indeed, be permanent; but except in very rare cases, it will not be popular, at least among a people so accustomed to self-government as the English. And since the successes of a ministry are speedily forgotten—for political gratitude is the rarest of all human virtues—while its mistakes are remembered, exposed, and exaggerated by its enemies, the strength of an administration will usually decline from the day that it enters office, and that of the opposition will receive a corresponding increase.

Yet under the limited constitutions which Canada possessed, the administration might be in a permanent minority, but it need not resign; the opposition might be in a permanent majority, but it could not compel a dissolution. And therefore the former, not being amenable to the will of the electors, had small reason to conciliate the popular vote; the latter, having neither the hope nor the fear of office, became

[1] There were continual disagreements of this kind in the West Indian Islands and other colonies where representative or Crown colony government had been introduced. They were seldom of more than local importance, and are therefore generally omitted in this work; they were, moreover, usually settled by the governor or the assembly giving way on the point at issue. Instances are mentioned in connection with the West Indies; vol. i. bk. ii. ch. vi.; vol. iv. bk. xii. ch. ii. and bk. xiii. ch. iii. Other examples will be found in abundance in the histories devoted to particular colonies. An interesting comparison might be drawn between these disputes and the friction in the German Reichstag and other European parliaments towards the close of the nineteenth century; more especially in the case of the demand for fuller powers put forward by the Russian Duma in its first session in 1907.

altogether irresponsible. 'The colonial demagogues,' it was said with truth, 'bade high for popularity without the fear of future exposure'[1]; and the constitution which gave representation without power was a very forcing-ground of demagogues.

Much could indeed be done, and in other colonies often was done, by a judicious governor to avoid political strife. But in Canada the result was a constant political deadlock. The Assemblies in every province availed themselves of their power to refuse supplies, and Government Bills were constantly rejected; the Legislative Councils, on the other hand, which were nominated by the Crown, were equally ready to throw out the measures of the lower chamber.

In Ontario the Family Compact, which the original Loyalist settlers had formed among themselves, ruled the governor and the province alike, by means of its permanent majority in the Legislative Council, and its monopoly of the public offices, to the bitter discontent of the newer immigrants. At this time 'the bench, the magistracy, the high offices of the Episcopal Church, and a great part of the legal profession, were filled by their adherents; by grant or purchase they had acquired nearly the whole of the waste lands of the province; they were all-powerful in the chartered banks, and till lately had shared among themselves almost exclusively all offices of trust and profit.'[2]

In Nova Scotia again, where a similar situation had developed, it was said with biting truth that 'a Council of twelve persons administered the government, and at the same time formed the upper branch of the Legislature, sitting invariably with closed doors. Only five of these twelve gentlemen were partners in one private bank, five of them were relations, two of them were heads of departments, and one was the chief justice, who in one capacity had to administer the law he had assisted to make, and then to advise the governor as to its

[1] The Durham *Report*. [2] *Ibid.*

execution. To heighten the absurdity of the whole affair, it is hardly necessary to add that only nine of these twelve were members of a particular church, which, however useful or respectable, only embraced one-fifth of the whole population of the province. To the passage of certain measures for the regulation of our currency, the derangement of which was supposed to be profitable to those who dealt in money, the bankers were said to have opposed their influence. Any attempt at reduction in the expense of the revenue departments, the heads of which sat at the board, was not likely to prevail; while the patronage of the Government was of course distributed by the nine churchmen, in a way not very satisfactory to the four-fifths of the people who did not happen to belong to that communion. Such a combination as this never could have grown up in any colony where the English principle of responsibility had been in operation.'[1]

In Newfoundland the two chambers showed such deadly enmity to each other that it was at one time necessary to suspend the constitution. And in Lower Canada the normal disputes between the Legislative Council and the Assembly culminated in the former body regularly rejecting the Bills sent up by the latter; while to prevent the loss of their measures, the Assembly indulged in the reprehensible device of 'tacking,'[2] by means of which controversial Bills were incorporated into measures whose passage was essential to the administration; and the Legislature was then forced to

[1] Howe's letter to Palmerston, dated from Halifax, N.S., 18th September 1839. And compare the Durham *Report*: 'It would almost seem as if the object of those by whom the system of government was established had been the combining of apparently popular institutions with an utter absence of all efficient control of the people over their rulers. . . . It is difficult to conceive what could have been their theory of government who imagined that in any colony of England a body invested with the name and character of a representative assembly could have been deprived of any of those powers which, in the opinion of Englishmen, are inherent in a popular legislature.'

[2] The whole question of tacking, which has arisen from time to time in the Imperial Parliament, is discussed in the recognised constitutional text-books.

accept or reject both together. In one extreme case a jury law was tacked to a Bill legalising certain canal tolls, with the result that both were rejected: the canal remained toll-free for a whole season, and the province was left without any safeguard for the selection of juries.

When matters reached such a pass, it was evident that the political condition of British America was extremely critical. But there were far graver reasons for disquietude in Quebec than the constitutional difficulty. That difficulty certainly agitated the province as well as its neighbours. But the real cause of the trouble in Lower Canada was the growing racial jealousy between the French and English inhabitants; the political deadlock was a mere symptom of the deeper trouble.

The Rebellions of 1837.

The jealousy was due, as we have seen, to the successful industrial competition of the better educated and more energetic English immigrants, and the consequent deposition of the French from their old position of supremacy. It was only in human nature that the latter should smart at their displacement; but the remedy was an obvious one.

The French had but to throw off their inertia, to relax something of their intense conservatism of idea, to introduce an educational system not inferior to the by no means superlatively high standard of their English rivals; and they would, within a few years, have recovered much of their lost ground. It is true that they had always opposed new ideas, that they possessed no inborn desire for knowledge, that they hated the abandonment of methods consecrated but hardly improved by generations of use; yet they were a docile people. They were accustomed to obey their leaders, whether the counsel was good or evil, harsh or easy: and had their leaders, the clergy and the native politicians of the province, counselled the French Canadians to embark on fresh methods of life, there is little doubt that they would have accepted, albeit with considerable demur and with some shivering by

the brink, the ungrateful plunge into the ocean of modern material progress.

But neither clergy nor politicians had any idea of educating the people. The priests, for all that they played so beneficent a part in French-Canadian life, were no friends to the spread of knowledge; the politicians were pure demagogues who, either incapable of or averse from pointing out the true road of advance, did their utmost to inflame racial animosity. They were educated men, who possessed all the influence which the educated possess over the uneducated. They were accomplished parliamentarians, who understood the business of obstruction in the Assembly at Quebec as well as any member of the House of Commons has ever understood it at Westminster. They had great power over their poor and ignorant constituents. That power might have been used for good; but it was used purely for evil.

Among their leaders the sinister figure of Louis Papineau, sometime Speaker of the Assembly and the chief agitator of the province, rises supreme above his fellow-politicians. His presence was winning, his manner persuasive; his talents were great, his influence over the French Canadians unequalled. His aim was simple; fortunately it was also impossible of realisation. The immediate design of Papineau was to obtain such a change in the constitution of 1791 as would make the Legislative Council elective; and he knew that the French majority in the province would then control the Upper, as it already controlled the Lower, representative House. His ultimate ideal was the foundation of a French-Canadian nation, or republic, in a Quebec that should no longer form part of the British Empire; and in the accomplishment of this ideal he received the enthusiastic support of a large number of the inhabitants of the province.

It is impossible not to sympathise in some degree with the aspirations of the French Canadians at this period. They had been conquered seventy years before; but the conquest

had irked them little, and during two generations they had submitted with equanimity to British rule. They had still remained the dominant people of Quebec; they had some reason to believe that they would always remain dominant. But their power in their own province was now slipping away from them; they were no longer the sole owners of its soil, the sole employers of its labour, the main arbiters of its destiny. Year by year their share in its control was growing smaller: the English were supplanting them, as the English had already supplanted the French in Nova Scotia and Cape Breton a century previously; and since it is not a pleasant thing for a people to be supplanted, they may be forgiven if they made some struggle to retain their old position. As it was, they seemed about to lose their economic and internal independence, as they had long lost their old political allegiance. Their condition had, indeed, improved in the interval. They were wealthier in 1837 than in 1763; they possessed, on the whole, a better government and considerably greater freedom. But such improvements count for little when national pride is wounded; often they merely increase the susceptibility to pain.

The French Canadian hated change of any sort; it was only natural that he should hate especially the change which silently dispossessed him of his land, his position, his local importance, and sometimes even of his home.

But whither could he turn for help in his distress? Britain had assisted him generously in the past; she would hardly assist him now, by excluding British immigration and enterprise from a British province. And to France, the old home of his race, he could not turn. The events of seventy years had cut him off from his motherland; he, who had revered the ancient dynasty of France, had seen that dynasty go down in the bloody outrages of a Revolution which he abhorred. He had seen the Catholic religion, the religion which in all his troubles still remained his nearest consolation, proscribed

and insulted by the godless leaders of a kingless state. He was utterly out of sympathy with the new France which had grown up under the First Republic and the First Empire; he had neither part nor lot in the sentiments and aspirations of the European descendants of his own forefathers.

To neither France nor Britain could he therefore turn; the United States were hardly less repellent to the French Canadian. They were instinct with that commercial activity, that restless spirit of material advance, which was wholly alien to his placid nature. They, too, had cast eyes upon his country, had invaded it, had fought with him; they, too, begrudged him the fertile meadows of Quebec. The interest which the United States took in his welfare was no altruistic sentiment; it was that of the wolf for the lamb. And it says much for the genuine distress of the French Canadian that 'an invading American army might have relied on the co-operation of almost the entire French population.'[1] 'They almost despaired, come what might, of preserving those ancient usages and that distinct nationality, in defence of which they had struggled so many years'[2]; and in that despair they were now ready to take any steps, however desperate, that might secure them the possession of some at least of their cherished customs.

The idea that the United States would befriend him without exacting toll for a somewhat dangerous service does credit to the simple faith of the French Canadian, but hardly to his worldly wisdom. And scarcely less ingenuous was the belief that Britain might consent to recognise his independence, that she would not trouble to put down a rebellion against her authority, but would allow Quebec peacefully to withdraw from the empire.

The age was certainly one in which oversea colonies were not greatly valued in England, for statesmen and political theorists were openly speculating as to their future secession.

[1] The Durham *Report*. [2] *Ibid.*

But the abstract consideration of a hypothetical event was a very different matter from an immediate disruption of British America. If certain thinkers of the day in England were doubtful of the value of the empire, the great mass of the nation was unmoved by their reasoning. Quebec was the keystone of Canada. Its loss would have meant the loss of Canada, of all that vast West into which British enterprise was now adventuring not without profit for itself and the world. And from any measures which would have culminated in that catastrophe the healthy common sense of the English people revolted.

On this point the French-Canadian peasants were deceived by their leaders, who had perhaps deceived themselves. They were even led to believe that Britain had no troops which she could send out to suppress a revolt, and that the honour of the troops which were already stationed in Quebec could easily be tampered with.

The situation now became critical. The language of the Press grew extremely violent; one journal of the extremists, the *Vindicator*, urged the French to 'Agitate! Agitate! Agitate! Destroy the revenue; denounce the oppressors. Everything is lawful when the fundamental liberties are in danger. Henceforth there must be no peace in the province, no quarter for the plunderers.' Other journals followed suit with similar incitements. An association of 'sons of liberty' was formed by the French youth of the province, which openly looked forward to a 'glorious destiny,' the 'fit opportunity for assuming our rank among the independent sovereignties of America.'

Feeling soon rose high on either side: outrages occurred, and some of the English farmers of the province were forced to take refuge in the towns. And as the winter of 1837 came on, meetings were summoned in various places: protests against British tyranny were received with acclamation; banners were waved and resolutions passed declaring that

the governor of the province was a 'robber of the public purse,' a 'persecutor of Canadians,' and 'an atrocious aggressor against Canadian liberty.'

The governor whose name was thus execrated was Lord Gosford, a man who proved himself incapable not only of tyranny, but even of taking the most ordinary measures of precaution against a public disturbance. He refused to countenance any move whatever against the agitators; and as a result of his criminal incapacity, the disorder quickly increased, and an armed rebellion broke out on 25th November 1837.

Fortunately a stronger man than Gosford was ready for the emergency. Sir John Colborne, the late Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, had recently been appointed commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America; and a man of his calibre, who had learnt his profession on the great battlefields of Europe in the Napoleonic wars, soon had the rebellion in hand. A few armed encounters took place, and an English prisoner was murdered; a village was burned: but a considerable force under Colborne soon suppressed the insurgents without difficulty. Papineau and some of the other leaders of the rebels had already fled; the whole rebellion lasted no longer than three weeks.

At Toronto, in Upper Canada, a similar revolt had occurred at the same time on a much smaller scale. But in this case the racial issue was absent; and the rebellion was not, as in Lower Canada, due to the jealousy with which the older inhabitants regarded the increasing strength of the newer immigrants, but to a directly opposite cause, to the discontent of the latter at the dominance of the province by the original settlers, and to the personal unpopularity of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Head. The political grievances of the reform party in Ontario, chief among which was a bitter question relating to the clergy reserves, were legitimate; but it is doubtful whether the leaders would have

proceeded to extremes had they not been fired by the example of Papineau in Lower Canada, and had not Ontario been denuded of troops to suppress the rising in Quebec.

The immediate crisis was quickly over, but angry feelings remained unabated. Some vague idea of founding a Canadian republic still survived among the French; and the English continued to fear that secret conspiracies were on foot among their defeated but exasperated neighbours. A vacillating policy would certainly have resulted in fresh outbreaks; yet a vacillating policy was all that could be expected from incompetents of the Gosford type. On all sides it was felt that it was high time for the imperial authorities to intervene, and to probe the abscess to the bottom; and since the cause of the trouble was not well understood in England—for the revolt in Lower as well as in Upper Canada was believed by some to be due to the struggle of a constitutional democracy against an unpopular administration—it was necessary to investigate the whole matter on the spot.[1] The constitution of Lower Canada was therefore suspended, and a High Commissioner was appointed to inquire into the cause of the Canadian discontent.

Quebec Constitution suspended: A High Commissioner appointed.

The man chosen by the British Government to bring order and contentment out of chaos and revolt was already one of the notable Englishmen of the age; his work in Canada proved him one of the great statesmen of the century. John George Lambton, first Earl Durham, who was born by the banks of the rushing Wear in the county of Durham on 12th April 1792, was sprung from a good north-country English family. His lineage was ancient: but notwithstanding the curse

John George Lambton, Lord Durham, 1792-1840.

[1] Sir William Molesworth, for instance, assumed that the suppression of both rebellions was 'an unholy struggle against liberty.' This view was commonly held by the English radicals at the time, and indeed by Durham, one of the radical leaders, until he had investigated the circumstances.

that a witch had once passed on his ancestors, that for nine generations not one Lambton should die in his bed, they had survived the spell; and their motto—*Le jour viendra*—showed an invincible optimism often necessary in the days of border strife, and splendidly fulfilled in the wider political area where John George Lambton was destined to move.

The Lambtons had assisted Charles I. during the English civil war; one had fallen in the king's cause at Marston Moor; another, having made his peace with Cromwell, administered the Leeward Isles under the Protectorate. Their position in the county gave the family an almost hereditary right to a seat in the House of Commons; but none had risen to high office in Parliament before the first Earl Durham.

Quick, impulsive, and generous-hearted as a boy, 'quite delirious' in his enthusiasms, according to one of his tutors, young Lambton was educated at Eton in the same years that Percy Bysshe Shelley attended that school; but a lifelong devotion to liberty gave no sign that the poet originated or even influenced the sentiment in the statesman. A brief career in the army was closed by a runaway marriage at Gretna Green,[1] and a short-lived but happy union ensued; but Lambton's parliamentary reputation was already assured before the death of his first wife overwhelmed him for a time with grief.

A second and not less happy marriage made him the son-in-law of Earl Grey, the leading Whig statesman of the day; but Lambton's political opinions were far in advance of the official Whig creed. He was known in the north as 'Radical Jack'; he sympathised heartily with the demands for wider freedom that were now put forward by those democrats who were too often condemned as demagogues among the political

[1] It is a coincidence that E. Gibbon Wakefield, who was associated with Lord Durham as an imperial statesman, also made a runaway match at Gretna Green. See vol. v. bk. xviii. ch. iii.

trimmers of the time ; and his elevation to the House of Lords in 1828 as Earl Durham made him the one outspoken advocate of reform in the strongly conservative Upper House. As a member of the Grey Cabinet which passed the first Reform Bill in 1832, his radical views gained him the love of the people and the suspicion of his colleagues ; and two brilliant missions to Russia succeeded at once in giving Durham employment and in keeping him out of the way of his more timorous political allies at home.

His reputation was already great when the rebellion in Canada forced the inactive Melbourne ministry, greatly against its will, to attempt a solution of the colonial trouble. The time seemed unpropitious for a bold measure of imperial statesmanship. Internal social and political troubles still kept the attention of Englishmen riveted at home ; only a few were interested in the outer empire and its development. Lord Melbourne himself, an indolent, good-humoured, and easy man, had no conception of imperial problems, as indeed he had no real conception of the empire.[1] His aim was the eternal aim of the second-rate politician who has been elevated by circumstances rather than ability into supreme power : he wished to remain in office so long as it was possible to do so without trouble and without actual discredit, to make a show of action without acting, to appear to govern without governing, and finally to leave the difficulties whose settlement he had shirked as an embarrassment to his successors.

The Colonial Secretary was a man after Melbourne's own heart. Lord Glenelg vacillated where he should have taken prompt measures ; he gave way where he should have been firm ; he was firm where he should have given way. It was not his fault that an empire was not lost in Australia and New Zealand as well as in Canada ; it was no credit to him that the dominion of the English people overseas progressed in

[1] See Melbourne's letter, quoted in vol. iv. bk. xvi. ch. ii.

spite of his rule. Had Glenelg had his way in the south, there would have been no settlement in Victoria, and New Zealand would have been at this day a French possession; had he had his way in the West, there would have been no solution of the Canadian difficulty, and Canada would probably have seceded from the empire in sheer exasperation. The Colonial Office has often been ruled by incompetent men; it has never been ruled by one more incompetent than Glenelg. It has often produced an example of the opposite evils of too much government and too little government; it has never, save under Glenelg, produced them both at the same time.

It was this Ministry which appointed Durham as Lord High Commissioner to Canada. The task which faced him was in any case one of exceptional difficulty. He needed all his own courageous ability at Quebec; he needed all the support which the British Government could give him, and which they alone could give him, in London. He knew, and Melbourne and Glenelg both knew, that his political and personal enemies would seize any opportunity of attack. There was at that time no quarter in party warfare; there is never any mercy in personal spite. The Tory opposition to the Whig Cabinet would seek to discredit the radical High Commissioner at every turn; and a zest would be lent to their zeal by the fact that Durham had for years fought strenuously against their party. It was the plain duty of the Government to be prepared to defend him, not only on the personal ground that his appointment was due to them, but also on the public ground that every servant of the state has the right to be defended by those responsible for the administration of the state. And the Cabinet knew that Durham had private enemies even more malignant than his foes in the opposition camp.

Lord Brougham, that erratic comet of the English political firmament, whose undoubted ability might have made him a

statesman had not his faults of character sometimes appeared to derange his intellect, had in earlier days been one of Durham's friends. Disagreements gave rise to enmity, and Brougham had attacked Durham savagely on the platform and in print, openly and anonymously. Brougham had never been a scrupulous, and he was now a disappointed man, while Durham was at the height of his career. And since Brougham had never placed the public advantage before private revenge, it was certain that he would at once fasten on any trivial error that Durham might commit, and denounce his successful rival with all the bitterness that cankered his own soul. Here again the Melbourne Cabinet should have been ready to defend the man whom they had appointed.

For a time, indeed, all went well. On 28th May 1838, Durham debarked to take up his duties at Quebec. He was received in sullen silence by the French; but, undismayed by their reluctance, he invited immediate co-operation and communications from all the inhabitants of the colonies; and he expressed himself of opinion that 'the prospect was not so clouded as he might have imagined.' The next few weeks were to disabuse him of that idea, for the considered language of his *Report on the Affairs of British North America* states it as the mature conviction of the High Commissioner that Canada was subject to 'evils which no civilised community could long continue to bear.' The people as a whole had 'no security for person or property, no enjoyment of what they possessed, no stimulus to industry. The development of the country was arrested.' He found the French to be 'utterly uneducated and singularly inert, implicitly obeying leaders who ruled them by the influence of a blind confidence and narrow national prejudices'; the English, on the other hand, were 'a very independent, not very manageable, and sometimes a rather turbulent democracy.' 'I expected,' he proceeded, 'to find

Durham, High Commissioner in Canada, 1838.

a contest between a government and a people. I found two nations warring in the bosom of a single state. I found a struggle, not of principles, but of races; and I perceived it would be idle to attempt any amelioration of laws and institutions, until we could first succeed in terminating the deadly animosity that now separates the inhabitants of Lower Canada into the hostile divisions of French and English.'[1]

With unerring instinct Durham had at once put his finger on the seat of the evil; and loyally aided by his secretaries, Edward Gibbon Wakefield and Charles Buller—the former at the beginning of a brilliant career, the latter a not less able man who was destined to be cut off in his early prime—the High Commissioner set himself to discover a means of moderating and, if possible, of terminating the deadly feud. As a preliminary step, he issued an Ordinance proclaiming a general amnesty, only excepting eight persons by name who had taken a leading part in the rebellion. Those eight persons were banished to Bermuda.

The step was at once wise, politic, and conciliatory. The amnesty proved the power and the generosity of his government. The banishment of the agitators removed all danger of a renewal of the rebellion; it was at the same time the most merciful course that Durham could have taken. Banishment was a lighter punishment than death, and nothing but the capital sentence would have availed had the agitators been tried by a special commission in Quebec. To have had them tried by a jury in the then condition of the province would have again reduced justice to a farce.

But at this point Brougham saw and seized the opportunity of revenge. He made a violent speech in the House of Lords, attacking the transportation of the eight prisoners to Bermuda; and the peers, not less pleased than Brougham of an occasion to distress an old enemy, passed on the second

[1] Citations from the Durham *Report*.

reading, by fifty-four votes to thirty-six, a motion which declared that Durham's action was illegal. The absent statesman was but weakly defended by the Government, although Melbourne recognised at once that 'the situation was very difficult and embarrassing.'[1] He admitted, however, that 'Durham's conduct had been most rash and indiscreet, and, as far as we can see, unaccountable. But to censure him now would either be to cause his resignation, which would produce great embarrassment, and might produce great evil, or to weaken his authority, which is evidently most undesirable.'

Durham, however, was over a thousand miles away, while Brougham was on the spot; and Melbourne was in no mind to defend the man whom he had urged to accept an ungrateful position when attacked by an impetuous foe. It is true that he had promised Durham his 'unflinching support' in his 'important and difficult duty'[2]; but Melbourne only gave support when it was not required. In the hour of need the graver faults of his character appeared; he and Glenelg now proved themselves weak, unstable, and unworthy politicians. It is easy, but not very honourable, to sacrifice an ally to placate an enemy; yet the indolent prefer ease to honour: and Melbourne sacrificed Durham. The law officers of the Crown advised that the whole of the High Commissioner's Ordinance was valid save the point referring to the detention of the prisoners at Bermuda; but Melbourne, rather than face the renewed criticism of Durham's personal enemy and of a partisan House of Lords, determined to disallow the whole Ordinance.

It was not the first time that a weak minister had jeopardised an empire. Melbourne knew that the consequences of his action must be grave, and might be disastrous; but he placed the convenience of his Cabinet before his duty to the Crown; he bartered his reputation as a statesman for a

[1] Letter to Victoria, 10th August 1838.
[2] Letter to Durham, 15th January 1838.

little ease in office. The price was a heavy one: he paid it seemingly with a light heart.

The blow to his authority, wrote Durham truly, was fatal. He had come to Canada with special, and indeed despotic powers; and faction had been stilled since his arrival. But those powers had been derived from the Imperial Government; and on the first occasion the Imperial Government had thrown him over.

It is true that his supporters in Canada were numerous; but they realised, as well as those whose interest lay in a continuance of faction, the irreparable harm that had been done. Popular feeling among the English was expressed by the burning of effigies of Brougham, Melbourne, and Glenelg in the streets; the darker side of the picture was shown by the immediate revival of seditious language among the French, by secret drillings at night, and by mutinous looks and language. Rebellion, remarked Durham, was now only a matter of time; and he, a discredited ruler, could do nothing to avert it.

His resignation and the letter of dismissal by the Melbourne Cabinet crossed on the high seas; in November, after a bare five months in Canada, Durham left Quebec to return to England. Profound gloom marked the scene as the vessel which carried him dropped down the St. Lawrence [1]; on all sides it was felt that the cowardly conduct of Melbourne had thrown Canada back into the critical condition from which she had barely escaped.

A renewed outbreak of rebellion in Quebec the following year was directly due to the recall of Durham; but fortunately Colborne, who had assumed the government on the departure of the High Commissioner, was able to crush the revolt. Had Melbourne not deserted Durham, however, there would have been no revolt at all.

Henceforth Melbourne, as is usual with those who have

[1] 'A sad day and a sad departure.'—Buller.

done an injury, had no good word to say for the man he had sacrificed. 'I do not expect much from Durham's suggestions,' he remarked while the latter was writing his great *Report on the Affairs of British North America*, an expectation doomed to speedy disappointment. And in a letter to Victoria on 7th May 1839, Melbourne thus characterised the man to whom he had appealed to save Canada. Durham 'was raised, one hardly knows how,' wrote the premier, 'into something of a fictitious importance by his own extreme opinions, by the panegyrics of those who thought he would serve them as an instrument, and by the management of the Press; but any little public reputation which he might once have acquired has been entirely dissipated and destroyed by the continued folly of his conduct in his Canadian government.'

The premier might have spared himself a criticism which demonstrated, indeed, his own lack of insight, but which could do little harm to the man whom he judged so harshly. For Durham was now about to pass beyond mortal praise or blame; he whose busy life had been full both of practical work and of generous ideals was already stricken with a fatal disease. Even before his visit to Canada, Durham had felt the urgent need of rest. 'It is impossible,' he wrote on accepting the appointment, 'for words to express the extreme reluctance with which I have consented to take this arduous task'; and his abandonment by the Imperial Government had preyed not only on that vigorous mind, but on that overwrought body. Buller noticed that his 'health was fearfully affected' by the censure he received; at one time it was even doubtful whether Durham would reach England alive. He survived the journey; but his *Report* was written, as it were, with his heart's blood. A few months longer Durham lived, broken in constitution, yet with spirits still undaunted: but a week before his death he confessed to his brother that he was 'getting tired.'

The admission was a sign of ebbing strength ; and the end now came with startling suddenness. On 28th July 1840, John George Lambton, Lord Durham, died, at the early age of forty-eight years ; Canada, said John Stuart Mill truly, had been the death of him. But he had been the life of Canada ; and with the courageous faith that recalled the motto of his house, almost his last words were, ' Canada will one day do justice to my memory.'

His faith was well founded. Canada already did him justice. And the time was to come when the whole empire would revere his name as that of the statesman who above all others showed the way of its future constitutional development ; even his own countrymen, who are as slow to learn as they are to forget a lesson, had already adopted the broad lines of his policy. Five days before his death the Canada Act received the royal assent ; and that Act was based upon the Durham *Report*.

The Durham *Report* [1] is an imperial classic, the political bible of the self-governing states of the British Empire, the solid basis on which the English nations overseas have built their constitutions. Every sentence of that report glows with the democratic fervour of its creator ; every page evidences the profound statesmanship underlying the suggestions of the High Commissioner. As an historical summary of the causes which gave rise to the rebellions in British America it was both brilliant and accurate ; as an indication of the future policy of the empire, its significance was epochal.

The Durham 'Report.'

[1] A rumour gained currency that the *Report* was not written by Durham. That rumour is shown to be baseless in Stuart Reid's *Life of Durham*, but it still survives in some quarters. It originated, as might have been expected, from the malicious tongue of Brougham, who remarked to Macaulay that ' the matter came from a felon, the style from a coxcomb, and the dictator furnished only six letters—Durham.' The felon was Wakefield, who had once been imprisoned for seduction ; the coxcomb was Buller. Both had rendered Durham loyal assistance ; but the *Report* itself was his own work.

The recent troubles in Canada had sprung from two causes, the one racial, the other constitutional; the one an attempt on the part of the French to secede from the empire, the other an attempt on the part of the English to secure more liberal institutions. The *Report*, therefore, dealt with the situation mainly under those two aspects; and in both cases the reforms it advocated necessitated radical changes in the administration. In the first place, Durham predicated that British America must be English; in the second, he predicated that it must be free, and that in a wider sense than had heretofore been the case.

Two races were striving for ascendancy in Quebec; and on the result of that struggle depended the whole future of Canada. The English settlers in the province had, indeed, determined that 'Lower Canada must be English, at the expense, if necessary, of being British,'—a threat of secession whose significance was unmistakable; but the Imperial Government had a more difficult part to play.

It was necessary to deal justly with the French as well as the English Canadians, else the citizenship of the empire was an empty boast; it was also necessary, in order to prevent a vacillating policy injurious to both races alike, to inquire which of the two must ultimately prevail. But in this direction at least the facts supplied a decisive answer. There was a large natural increase among the French and English every year. But over and above that increase, there had been, and there would be again, under settled conditions, a large immigration of English settlers; while the immigration of settlers from France had altogether ceased. The result was obvious. 'The whole interior of the British dominions must, ere long, be filled with an English population, every year rapidly increasing its numerical superiority over the French. Was it just,' asked Durham, 'that the prosperity of this great majority, and of this vast tract of country, should be for ever, or even for a while, impeded by the artificial

bar which the backward laws and civilisation of a part, and a part only, of Lower Canada, would place between them and the ocean? Was it to be supposed that such an English population would ever submit to such a sacrifice of its interests?'

But 'the only power that could be effectual at once in coercing the disaffection, and hereafter obliterating the nationality of the French, was that of a numerical majority of a loyal and English population' in Quebec; and that majority the British did not yet possess. It must therefore 'henceforth be the first and steady purpose of the British Government to establish an English population, with English laws and language, in that province, and to trust its government to none but a decidedly English Legislature.'

Such a policy might in the course of years give the English a numerical majority in Quebec. But in the meantime the French were largely in the ascendant; and it would have been both unwise and unfair to continue the suspension of the constitution indefinitely until their ascendancy was obliterated. Yet if the old constitution of the province were revived, the old friction would also revive between a mainly English Legislative Council nominated by the Crown and a mainly French Assembly elected by the people. That course was clearly impossible; hardly less impossible was the alternative of confining the franchise to the English minority. It was not by depriving the French of institutions which they had learnt to value that the problem of Canada could be solved.

A third course presented itself in the union of the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada; and this was that which Durham recommended. From the administrative aspect such a union would be economical and efficient; from that of Ontario it would be satisfactory, since the standing dispute as to the division of revenue between the two provinces would cease. And more important than either of these considerations, the union of the two provinces would give a clear

English majority. The French population of Canada numbered some 450,000. There were 400,000 English in Upper, and 150,000 in Lower Canada; the two provinces together possessed an adequate although not excessive majority over the French. And Durham had 'little doubt that the French, when once placed by the legitimate course of events and the working of natural causes in a minority, would abandon their vain hopes of nationality.'

By means of such a union of the two provinces, in short, the future of Canada as an English community would be secured. That aim was in itself important, but it was only half the problem which faced Durham. It was not less important that Canada should be free; and in this connection the existing constitution had proved far from satisfactory.

Another part of the *Report* therefore dealt with a reform of the Canada Act of 1791, which was the basis of the constitutions of Ontario and Quebec; and Durham's recommendation on this point was as simple as in those days it was revolutionary. His political creed in England had been based on trust in the people; he applied the same maxim to the empire at large as to the kingdom, and recommended the Imperial Government to place the same trust in the people of the colonies as they were slowly learning to place in the people at home. It was essentially the same race, with the same ideas, the same beliefs, the same theories of rule, which populated the colonies and the motherland; they should therefore, argued Durham, possess essentially the same constitutions.

He disposed quickly and almost contemptuously of the idea that the colonies were disloyal. 'My own observation convinces me,' he wrote, 'that the predominant feeling of all the English population of the North American colonies is that of devoted attachment to the mother country. The proofs which many, who are much dissatisfied with the existing administration, have given of their loyalty are not to be denied or overlooked. The attachment constantly exhibited

by the people of these provinces towards the British Crown and Empire has all the characteristics of a strong national feeling. They value the institutions of their country, not merely from a sense of the practical advantages which they confer, but from sentiments of national pride; and they uphold them the more, because they are accustomed to view them as marks of nationality, which distinguish them from their republican neighbours.'

But if the colonists possessed confidence in Britain, Britain must equally possess confidence in them. 'The British people of the North American colonies are a people on whom we may safely rely, and to whom we must not grudge power.' They were compact of the same stuff as the people of the motherland; they were stiff-necked, they were ambitious, and they possessed an indomitable passion for freedom. They were impatient of opposition and restriction; and therefore 'a blind reliance on the all-enduring loyalty of our countrymen might be carried too far.' They saw clearly that under existing circumstances there were disadvantages as well as advantages in the imperial tie. They saw that the United States were more prosperous than themselves, that the citizens of the republic possessed more freedom than they did; and they resented a comparison which forced itself upon them every time they crossed the international frontier. Their loyalty was strong, but it was 'not politic to waste and cramp their resources, and to allow the backwardness of the British provinces everywhere to present a melancholy contrast to the progress and prosperity of the United States.' Already some of them, 'without abandoning their attachment to the mother country, had begun, as men in a state of uncertainty are apt to do, to calculate the probable consequences of a separation'; and there were elements of grave danger in such calculations. Yet if the English in Canada were capable of seceding from the empire, they had no wish to take a course which was repugnant to all but an extremely

insignificant minority: 'I have no reason,' reported the ex-High Commissioner, 'to believe that anything can make them generally desirous of separation, except some such act of the Imperial Government as shall deprive them of all hopes of obtaining real administrative power.'

The people of Canada must therefore, observed Durham, be given full control over their internal affairs; they must be entrusted with the power of ruling themselves. They must possess the substance, not the shadow, of political rights. The administrations which ruled them must be responsible to them; the executive must be the executive chosen by the majority of the voters. The two provinces would gain in strength by union and by the grant of autonomy; and that gain would be advantageous not only to themselves, but to the whole empire. 'I do not anticipate,' reported Durham, 'that a Colonial Legislature thus strong and thus self-governing, would desire to abandon the connection with Great Britain. On the contrary, I believe that the practical relief from undue interference, which would be the result of such a change, would strengthen the present bond of feelings and interests; and that the connection would only become more durable and advantageous, by having more of equality, of freedom, and of local independence. But at any rate, our first duty is to secure the wellbeing of our own colonial countrymen; and if in the hidden decrees of that wisdom by which this world is ruled, it is written that these countries are not for ever to remain portions of the empire, we owe it to our honour to take good care that, when they separate from us, they should not be the only countries on the American continent in which the Anglo-Saxon race shall be found unfit to govern itself.'

Such were the substantial recommendations of a report which caused an extraordinary sensation in England and in the colonies with which it was more immediately concerned. The suggestions of Lord Durham were praised, condemned,

and criticised on all hands. The political enemies and the tepid party friends of the ex-High Commissioner disliked the boldness of his reforms, forgetting that the seriousness of the situation in Canada forbade mere tinkering. Conservative opinion everywhere hesitated to risk a step into the unknown, forgetting after its accustomed manner that the future could no more be hindered than the past could be recalled. There were likewise those who remembered the revolt of the older settlements in America, and were suspicious of any extension of the constitution of Canada and any enlargement of the power of its people, lest by so doing they should assist towards a second secession. Their distrust was of the kind that could be silenced neither by argument nor by fact; they distrusted loyalty and liberty alike. And a considerable opposition was shown in Canada by those whose interests were adversely affected: the Family Compact in Ontario and the French in Quebec were at one in their dislike of a reform which would evidently rob them of their former influence. Some of the latter, indeed, protested that 'their rights, their liberties as British subjects, were crushed under their feet. Nothing in the world should induce them to vote for a single candidate, who did not declare himself against this infamous Act and its provisions.' A more moderate opinion, however, was expressed in the *Canadien* newspaper, which stated that 'although we are sincerely opposed to the legislative union, we too well foresee the anarchy, the political and social misery that any agitation for the repeal of the union would entail upon all parties, not to desire that the two populations should come to some understanding, to carry out the brilliant destiny that Nature has placed within their grasp.'[1]

Criticism of the 'Report.'

There spoke the better type of French Canadian, who was tired of strife and struggle and useless controversy; and a majority of Canadians, who saw that Durham aimed at the

[1] *Canadien*, 20th November 1840; quoted by Kingsford.

good of the community as a whole and not at the interests of any one class, were enthusiastically in support of his suggestions. Several months passed in acute political controversy, but resolutions were eventually agreed to that the union should be supported. Meanwhile the imperial authorities had watched the situation and the trend of opinion closely; and the same British administration which had deserted Durham in so cowardly a fashion nearly two years before now determined to act on his suggestions. A Bill to unite the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada passed through Parliament in the session of 1840; on 10th February 1841, the union was officially proclaimed at Montreal; and four months later, on 14th June, the first responsible parliament of United Canada was convened at the new capital of Kingston.

Its Recommendations adopted. The Provinces united under Responsible Government, 1840.

The course of the next thirty years made clear the strength and the weakness of Durham's work. Much of that work was permanent in its character; but some part of it had to be undone. The French did not lose their nationality, as he had hoped and expected; the English in the various provinces did not lay aside their sectional jealousies so readily as he had believed. But if old enmities still survived, it was because the passage of time, and not the influence or the counsel of any one man, could alone subdue the bitterness. Yet the union of Upper and Lower Canada, which Durham suggested, was in fact the first practical step towards the formation of the Dominion of Canada; and although that consummation was delayed another generation, there is external and impartial evidence that in the meantime British America was advancing on the right lines.

The Outcome.

Discord and disagreement still divided the two peoples of Canada; but after the union of the provinces the situation was in every respect more hopeful than before. Racial and constitutional friction, indeed, continued, as Durham had

foreseen when he wrote that the 'passions inflamed during so long a period cannot speedily be calmed'[1]; misunderstandings were sometimes wilful, and political reform had not succeeded in abolishing the demagogue. But under the new system Ontario and Quebec grew steadily more prosperous. Both English and French were industrious; and if the latter yet lagged considerably behind their neighbours, they caught something of the British spirit of enterprise. There was some slight measure of co-operation between the two races; and others besides native Canadians were now ready to admit that the colonies had a future.

It was at this period that Secretary W. H. Seward, an able official of the United States Government, travelled through Canada; and on his return home he expressed his opinions clearly and forcibly. 'Hitherto, in common with most of my countrymen,' he wrote,[2] 'I have thought Canada a mere strip lying north of the United States, easily detachable from the parent state, but incapable of sustaining itself, and therefore ultimately, nay, right soon, to be taken on by the Federal Union, without materially changing or affecting its own condition or development. I have dropped the opinion as a national conceit. I see in British North America a region grand enough for the seat of a great empire. I find its inhabitants vigorous, hardy, energetic. . . . I find them jealous of the United States and of Great Britain, as they ought to be; and therefore, when I look at their extent and resources, I know that they can neither be conquered by the former nor permanently held by the latter. They will be independent, as they are already self-maintaining. . . . The policy of the United States is to propitiate and secure the alliance of Canada while it is yet young and incurious of its future. But the policy which the United States actually pursue is the infatuated one of rejecting and spurning vigor-

[1] Durham's *Report*.
[2] *A Cruise to Labrador*, by the Hon. W. H. Seward (1857).

ous and ever-growing Canada, while seeking to establish feeble states out of decaying Spanish provinces on the coast and islands of the Gulf of Mexico. I shall not live to see it, but the man is already born who will see the United States mourn over this stupendous folly.'

The future of the Canadian nation, silently forming during these years of industrial prosperity and political strife, was still uncertain; but whatever that future might be, it was becoming increasingly evident that incorporation with the United States was no part of its destiny. The individuality of its people was already too strong to be merged in that even of a mighty neighbour.

CHAPTER V

THE DOMINION OF CANADA: 1841-67[1]

THE material progress of British North America during the twenty years after the departure of Lord Durham from Canada was visible to every traveller who observed the growth of farm and city, of field and factory, in Ontario and Quebec.

[1] Authorities.—Kingsford's great history closes with the year 1841, and there is no single comprehensive work of equal value to take its place. Cockburn's *Political Annals of Canada*, although bald and incomplete in detail, is occasionally useful. The politics of the period are best treated in Pope's *Life of Sir John Macdonald* and Mackenzie's *Life of George Brown*, both full of information on the party affairs of Ontario and Quebec; J. C. Dent's *Last Forty Years* and Young's *Public Men and Public Life in Canada* may also be consulted with advantage. And there are some useful references to the annexation and protectionist movements in Porritt's *Sixty Years of Protection in Canada*, an able although unsympathetic work; also in the various writings of Goldwin Smith. Colonel Denison's *Struggle for Imperial Unity* discusses the question from the opposite point of view.

The constitutional side of the federation problem may be studied in Egerton and Grant, *Canadian Constitutional Development*, which contains many of the documents; and more fully in Houston's *Constitutional Documents relating to Canada*; Hassard, *Canadian Constitutional History and Law*; Clement, *The Canadian Constitution*; Wheeler's *Confederation Law of Canada*; and Bourinot's *Federal Government in Canada*, which

Railways were projected and built; canals were dug, roads were made. Steamers began to ply on the St. Lawrence and the great lakes; in spite of occasional commercial depression, trade advanced considerably. And hopeful emigrants once more turned their faces from the United Kingdom to the now united colonies of Upper and Lower Canada; new careers again opened out in the West to those whose lives were clipped and stunted for lack of opportunity at home.

Many succeeded and some failed in the rough business of frontier civilisation; yet from all alike Canada took its toll, in the work and effort, the sweat, the money, and the brains that were poured unceasingly into a land whose future was still altogether malleable and uncertain.

The Political Deadlock.

But the political advance of the United Provinces was far less evident. The old misunderstandings between French and English settlers continued. Both claimed their full, perhaps rather more than their full, rights; few were ready to admit the rights of the other race. And the English colonists were not always friendly among themselves; there was not much belief in co-operation, practically none in union.

Party politics were discussed with extraordinary virulence. The agitator Papineau again attempted to stir up strife. The Governor of the United Provinces was once saluted with the black flag when he visited Brockville in Ontario; elsewhere missiles were thrown at him. And in the year 1849 the violence of the extremists in Montreal passed all bounds; for the parliament buildings were attacked and destroyed by fire; the residences of cabinet ministers were wrecked, and the offices of those newspapers which had taken an unpopular line were severely damaged. For these outrageous

contains a comparison of the constitution with that of Britain and the United States; and the same author's *Manual of Constitutional History*, the 1901 edition of which includes full references to the provincial authorities. Some later aspects of the federation may be studied in *Imperial Supervision Over Dominion Legislation*, 1867-95.

excesses of an excited mob, Montreal was rightly disbarred from being the parliamentary capital of Canada; henceforth the legislature sat alternately in Toronto and Quebec. The inconvenience occasioned by this ambulatory procedure, however, was so considerable that Ottawa was chosen as the permanent parliamentary capital[1] in 1858; but although political feeling continued to run high, there were no more actual appeals to mob rule.[2]

Nevertheless, parliamentary institutions were still carried on with considerable difficulty. Responsible government had

[1] The city of Ottawa had originally been called Bytown, taking its name from a certain Colonel John By who had settled there in 1827. A few rough houses were already in existence at the time; but it was a wild place, the surrounding country full of wolves, which sometimes even ventured to thrust their noses against the windows of the log-cabins. The town grew slowly; so late as 1854 the streets were unpaved, there were no gardens, fruits, or flowers; boulders and masses of rock were still lying about among the groups of houses, and firs and other forest trees were again springing up out of the old stumps. It is hardly surprising that the decision to make Ottawa the parliamentary capital of Canada was extremely unpopular for a time; the place would certainly have attained nothing like its present importance had not this greatness been thrust upon it. The natural beauty of its situation, however, goes far to justify the choice.

For a good description of the old settlement of Bytown and early Ottawa, see the first volume of the *Transactions* of the Women's Canadian Historical Society of Ottawa. It may be noted that in 1864 George Brown, who had been one of the chief opponents of the Ottawa scheme, admitted that 'the buildings were magnificent; style, extent, site, and workmanship all surpassingly fine.' Yet he still had some criticisms to make. 'The buildings were just five hundred years in advance of the time; it would cost half the revenue of the province to light and heat and keep them clean. Such monstrous folly was never perpetrated before.' And he also condemned the Governor-General's residence as 'a miserable little house.'—Letter to J. A. Macdonald, 15th August 1864.

[2] As an instance of the low tone of political discussion during this period the following anecdote may be cited. An unhappy Governor of Canada was slowly dying of one of the most agonising and disfiguring of diseases; and his case was incurable. It happened that he was unpopular in certain circles. In these circumstances, one, Drummond, a Montreal politician, made a speech to his constituents, saying, 'And they accuse us, gentlemen, of disloyalty! And to whom, do you think? To Sir Charles Metcalfe! Is Sir Charles Metcalfe the embodiment of the British Constitution? Is the British Constitution liable to be carried off by a cancer?' The disgusting brutality of the allusion fully justified the French Canadian who is said to have spoken to a lady about this time in the following manner: 'Madame, un homme politique est un

been somewhat grudgingly granted to Canada by the imperial authorities since 1841; but no administration remained long in office, few politicians commanded respect, and hardly any possessed real authority. And in time an absolute deadlock reduced the Canadian Legislature to impotence. Between May 1861 and June 1864 two general elections were held; three successive governments were formed, defeated, and forced to hand in their resignations to the Governor.

It was evident that these unhappy divisions could not continue without grave danger. Administration was impossible under such conditions; yet the true solution of the problem was no easy one. Union and separation of the two colonies had both been tried; neither had succeeded. An autocratic government might, indeed, have ruled Upper and Lower Canada with cool impartiality. But the whole tendency of the time was towards greater freedom, and arbitrary rule would now have been unpopular with all parties, even though constitutional methods had failed.

There remained yet another solution; and that was one which the people of the United States had not hesitated to try when the disagreements between the northern and southern states of the republic became acute. The American Civil War of 1861 might have supplied an example to the divided races of Canada in 1864 which, in certain conditions of the popular mind and in the absence of the imperial troops, would have proved irresistible.

Fortunately, however, for the English people, the forces which made for union in British North America, like those which had made for union in the United States some seventy years before, on the whole proved stronger than the forces making for separation. Ever since Ontario had grown up

homme sans entrailles, je dirai presque, sans conscience.' Whatever respect Canadian politicians had for their consciences—and they do not appear to have been conspicuously above the general level—they had little respect for the decencies of debate; while the newspapers echoed, and sometimes outdid, the violence of the politicians.

beside Quebec, and the maritime provinces had developed into definitely English communities, a few far-seeing men had looked to a federal union as the solution of some at least of Canada's difficulties. But the consummation for which they waited was long in ripening, and the question whether or not a Canadian nation should be born hung long in an uncertain balance.

That question might still have waited indefinitely for an answer, had not the deadlock in the Legislature produced a sudden crisis. The British colonies in North America now stood at the parting of the ways. Three possible lines of development faced the Canadian provinces; and the passing of two generations had not decided the issue between them.

Three Alternatives before Canada.

In the first place, the various provinces might continue as of old, isolated, suspicious, and jealous of each other, defenceless against a common enemy.

In the second, they might secede from the British Empire and become absorbed in the United States.

In the third, they might still remain within the empire; but while so remaining, they might unite among themselves, either on the federal basis which would maintain the internal independence of each province—a system which had been tried in the neighbouring republic with success, but which for various reasons had visibly failed in the Spanish-American colonies; or they might unite in that completer union of which the British Isles furnished a conspicuous example.

The first alternative would hamper the development of Canada. The second would annihilate its individuality. The third would go far to establish it as a nation.

The first alternative was to allow matters to continue as they were; and since there are always a certain number of persons in a community, even in a new community, to whom change of any kind is distasteful, this course was advocated by many. In every crisis there is a

1. To Remain Disunited.

party which believes that inaction is the highest wisdom, which minimises the benefits and exaggerates the possible dangers of reform, even when reform is inevitable: and such a party was not lacking in Canada.

The same sturdy feelings of local patriotism which had distinguished the older English colonies in America had grown up in Canada; and in addition to the racial difficulty in Quebec, the British provinces were divided from each other by conflicting and even opposed interests which rendered the construction of any acceptable federal scheme an extremely delicate operation. The various colonies had been founded at different times, by different classes of men, and they had developed strikingly different characteristics. The connection between them had always been of the slightest. They had no common aims. And they could have but little knowledge of, or communication with, one another, at a time when travelling was always a difficult and sometimes a dangerous occupation, when the roads were still little more than primitive tracks, when railways were few and inconvenient, and when the one practicable highway of Canada was a river which was closed to navigation during several months of the year.

It is therefore hardly surprising that sectional or provincial interests commonly prevailed over the larger ideal of national union. The man who had made his home in Ontario or Newfoundland loved Ontario or Newfoundland; he had no conception of a federation of the whole of British North America, in which not only Ontario and Newfoundland, but every other province of Canada was united. His outlook was exclusively local: he was absorbed in the politics of his district, so far as he found time for anything beyond the range of his own personal affairs; and he gave little attention to the disputes which might agitate a neighbouring province, since they were disputes in which he possessed neither the power nor the inclination to intervene.

It is true that there was much popular discontent with the local governments of the provinces; but the agitation concerned the limitations of power in the governments themselves, and not the limitations of territory within which each petty administration was confined. And so far as any definite movement towards union existed, there were many who distrusted and opposed a step which would probably diminish their own local importance or the comparative importance of their province; while some honestly believed that a union would do harm to the district or the city in which they lived, and were therefore ready to defend the old administrative divisions with precisely the same arguments that the advocate of 'state rights' in the neighbouring republic had advanced in the previous century.

That there was some foundation for these objections need not be disputed. Few reforms are so gentle in their action that they do not disturb or even destroy certain existing interests; no reform worth striving for has ever yet escaped opposition from interests which are threatened or which suppose themselves threatened by its working. But so long as it is wise to place the permanent advantage of the whole community above the temporary and often accidental advantage of a mere section of that community, so long will it be wise to look at politics from a national and not from a provincial point of view. The long struggle between the individual states and the nation had already been decided in the United States in favour of the latter; the same struggle was now to be fought out in Canada with the same result.

That section of Canadian opinion which disliked the idea of a federation of British America was generally derived from the older stock of settlers, whose affection for the province in which they had been reared was naturally greater than their regard for an abstract principle of union. The second alternative before the still divided provinces, that of amalgamation with the United

2. To amalgamate with the United States.

States, appealed mainly, so far as it appealed at all, to the more recent immigrants, men to whom the old associations and traditions of the Canadian provinces meant nothing, but to whom freedom of opportunity meant everything. They had come to Canada with the praiseworthy intention of improving their condition ; and the form of government under which they lived was of little importance to them so long as it imposed no hindrance on their efforts to do so. But they saw that Canada was hampered by its divisions ; they saw that the United States was not so hampered ; and they drew the obvious moral.

They were animated by no such feelings of enmity against the republic as the older generation of Canadians. The wrongs of the United Empire Loyalists were nothing to them, if indeed they had ever heard of those wrongs ; but the Family Compact of the United Empire Loyalists, which stayed their advance in Ontario, meant very much to them. They had no concern with the hatred of the French Catholics of Quebec against the American Protestants of New England : but it concerned them very nearly that every obstacle was put in their way in Quebec, while no obstacles at all menaced them in New England.

These were the men who had for years past come to Canada as British immigrants, and who had, after a few months' experience of the colonies, made their way by thousands over the border to settle in the republic. These were the men who were filling the new cities and ploughing the new farms of Illinois and the American West, but who might under better conditions have remained to increase the population and the prosperity of Canada. These were the men whose permanent loss to the empire had perplexed and saddened Durham, but who continued to leave the colonies until they could obtain the same privileges and opportunities under the Union Jack that were freely offered them under the Stars and Stripes.

Many, indeed, had remained and prospered in Canada; a few had even begun to sympathise with the views held in the older and more exclusive colonial society. But such cases were rare; the majority had associated themselves with the reforming movement which had produced the rebellions of 1837; and from a certain number of these men, active, energetic traders in the cities, or farmers on the land, came the agitation in favour of secession from the empire and amalgamation with the United States.

It was recognised on all sides that Canada was too weak to maintain her independence alone. The ideal of a French-Canadian nation had been considerably damaged by the easy suppression of the outbreak of 1837 in Quebec, although it appeared again from time to time in the later history of the province; and a ridiculous 'Declaration of Independence' which was issued in the same year met with no response whatever.[1] If Canada seceded from the empire she must join the republic; complete independence at that time was impossible.

The movement in favour of amalgamation with the United States was considerable in its extent, but the number of its adherents fluctuated greatly; and, as is the case with all movements whose end is negative, it is impossible to state how many either supported it or were prepared to support it. That it should have existed at all is perhaps hardly more surprising than that it should have failed in its purpose; for secession was the only one of the three alternatives before Canada that was assisted from external sources. The people and Press of the United States naturally painted the advantages of absorption by the republic in glowing colours; and unhappily the anti-imperial movement in Canada received continual and weighty support from a section of the now dominant Free Trade party in Britain, the leaders of which did not scruple to speak of the disruption of the British Empire

[1] A petition for Canadian independence was also presented to the Parliament at Toronto in 1850. It obtained no more than seven supporters.

as an inevitable and not undesirable event whose occurrence could not be long delayed.[1]

But the advantages of American friendship, and the effect of the cajolery which was occasionally employed in the United States to gain adherents to the cause of annexation in Canada, were more than neutralised by occasional acts or talk of aggression by the larger on the smaller community.[2] These were strongly resented in Canada, particularly by the United Empire Loyalists, whose hatred of the republicans, even to the second and third generation, was remarked by every casual visitor to Ontario ; and the solid obstacle which that sentiment placed in the way of annexation was more than sufficient to outweigh the not very influential movement in its favour.

There remained yet the third alternative, that the various provinces of British North America should amalgamate in one union or federation ; and that having thus united or federated together, the associated provinces should still remain within the empire. It was this alternative that Canada finally determined to

3. To Federate within the Empire.

[1] The anti-imperial movement in Britain is fully discussed in vol. iv. bk. xvi. One of its most convinced advocates was Professor Goldwin Smith, who stated in 1866 that 'the British North American colonies would in time, and probably at no very distant time, unite themselves to the group of states, of which they were already by race, position, commercial ties, and the character of their institutions, a part. No one could stand by the side of the St. Lawrence and doubt that in the end they would do this, but they would be left to do it of their own free will.' These words were spoken in England ; a subsequent residence of nearly forty years in Canada did not convince Goldwin Smith that he was wrong.

[2] An optimistic member of the American Congress once introduced a Bill at Washington to enable any Canadian province to join the United States at any time. I cannot discover that it was greeted with much enthusiasm across the border.

But there was some excuse for the widespread American belief that Canada would eventually amalgamate with the United States. The annexation movement in the colony, the utterances of many discontented Canadian politicians, and the grumblings of the traders, were quite enough to mislead opinion in the republic ; to say nothing of the prophets of imperial disruption in England who looked on Canadian secession as a foregone conclusion.

follow; the influences which decided her people, after prolonged hesitation and considerable opposition, to pursue this course, came from various quarters, internal and external, and were exerted in moulding her national destiny during a period of more than twenty years.

The first cause that indirectly influenced the union of Canada within the empire was one that had originally seemed likely to lead to its speedy secession and probably association with the United States.

In the year 1846 the British Government decided to discard the protective tariff system to which it had adhered for centuries, in favour of the policy of free trade. The Cabinet determined on this complete fiscal revolution, not so much on account of the able propaganda which had been maintained for some years on behalf of what was then a novel economic doctrine, as because the pressing necessities of the United Kingdom demanded a change in the laws relating to the importation of corn. Those necessities were immediate and urgent, and free trade was adopted by Britain without consulting the colonies as to the effect the change would have upon their industries.

Free Trade and Canada, 1846.

With its effect on Britain we are not at the moment concerned[1]; but its effect on colonial industry could not fail to be extremely serious. Hitherto the British colonies had always been substantially favoured by the tariff laws of the United Kingdom; henceforth they had to compete with all the world in the market where all the world wished to sell. And the British colonies were still young; their industries, save in the West Indies, were still in the experimental stage. To deprive those industries of British protection, therefore, was as though one were to deprive a toddling child of its mother's guiding hand, and not only to deprive it thus, but to bid it compete in a race against men.

Angry protests came from all the colonies; but the rising

[1] The purely insular aspect of free trade is discussed in vol. iv. bk. xvi.

manufacturing interests in Britain, which were now obtaining the political power to which their growing wealth and importance entitled them, paid little heed to these remonstrances; indeed, the leading representatives of the new economic school, Richard Cobden and John Bright, were even heard to advocate the disruption of the empire as a matter of serious policy. And the older school of protectionists in England could likewise pay little heed to the protests from overseas, for they were also in the same plight as the colonies. The ground on which they had relied as the solid rock had been cut from beneath their feet.

For good or ill, the new system had been adopted by Britain, and the colonies had to make the best of it. Several years of commercial depression marked its effect in British North America; but even at its inception, the Governor of Canada stated that the consequences might be so serious as to cause the united provinces to repudiate their debt, which had been guaranteed by the British Government, and that the commercial ruin which the loss of protection in the British market would cause the colonies must be incalculable.[1] And Isaac Buchanan, a Canadian who was in London at the time, and who afterwards made his mark as a leader of the protectionists in Canada, also predicted that free trade would cause the ruin of the monarchy and the empire; he stated, too, that a word from England would now be sufficient to make the Canadians cheerfully abandon the imperial connection, since there could no longer be any but the slightest bond of interest between a nation which had broken her pledges and a colony which was suffering under the effect of such a perfidy.[2]

The Annexation Movement.

Some appearance of probability was given to these prophecies in Canada, by a petition in which the merchants

[1] Cathcart to Gladstone, 28th January 1846. It is scarcely necessary to say that Cathcart's fear that the colonies might repudiate their debt was unfounded.

[2] Isaac Buchanan, letter in the London *Times*, 6th February 1846.

of Quebec protested that the new policy would 'gradually, silently, and imperceptibly' wean the Canadians from the true allegiance which they owed to Britain, and dispose them to consider a closer connection with the United States, with which country they must henceforth have more frequent intercourse. And an agitation was openly started at Montreal in favour of the annexation of Canada by the United States; a manifesto was issued in 1849 by the organisers of this movement which pictured the colony as a 'country exhibiting every symptom of a nation fast sinking to decay,' and advocated 'union with the republic on equitable terms' as the only remedy for the 'acknowledged and insufferable ills' from which Canada was now suffering. Nine hundred and sixty-nine persons signed the manifesto, among whom were two Queen's Counsellors, several Justices of the Peace, and many other persons of importance.

There was much public, and probably considerably more private, discussion of the annexation question at this time; but the manifesto of 1849 was the flood-mark of the movement in Canada. It is undeniably true that the adoption of free trade by Britain appreciably weakened for a time the strength of the imperial tie which bound England to her colonies; it is also true that the leading free-traders of the mother country foresaw this weakening, and not only did not regret it, but actually encouraged it as one of the substantial benefits which their system would confer. But the weakening was only temporary; the advocates of separation, both in England and Canada, were never more than an active minority, and the spontaneous action of the Canadians proved that the sentiment of loyalty could survive the sacrifice of commercial advantage.

Loyalty distinct from Commerce.

In none but a commercial age could the fact have been doubted. For loyalty, indeed, is not unlike the rose, in that the poorer the soil in which it is planted the stronger

blooms that noble flower, when other blossoms fade and die.

And the continued existence of Canadian loyalty was demonstrated when it became clear that the annexation manifesto had no popular backing in the province, while the impetuous politicians who had signed it hastened to disavow an act which they speedily discovered to be prejudicial to their future careers.

A still more pronounced indication of Canadian loyalty to Britain was given during the next few years. In the Crimean War of 1854 many Canadians fought side by side with the British and French troops; and when the Indian Mutiny broke out three years later, Canada offered to raise a volunteer regiment for service abroad. The offer—the first of the kind which had ever been received from a colony—was gratefully accepted by the imperial authorities, and the Royal Canadian Regiment was added to the British army.[1] And not very long afterwards the practical sympathy of Canada with England was shown in equally effective, if less dramatic, fashion by the raising of a fund to relieve the distress among the cotton operatives in Lancashire during the commercial crisis of 1862.

Buchanan's hasty prediction that the abandonment of the old fiscal policy by England would result in the downfall of the monarchy and the disruption of the empire reads rather oddly in the light of these events; for the Crown steadily increased its hold on the affection of the people during the Victorian age, and the enthusiastic welcome given to the young Prince of Wales when he visited Canada in 1860 showed that the sentiment of loyalty to the monarchy was by no means confined to the mother country.[2] The presence of the heir to the throne on Canadian soil gave a warmer

[1] A history of the regiment will be found in the first volume of the *Transactions* of the Women's Canadian Historical Society of Ottawa.

[2] A racy description of this visit may be found in *The King's Visit to Canada*, by Lieutenant Gough.

personal touch to the abstract feeling which had survived three thousand miles of dividing ocean; but, indeed, loyalty to the throne had always been strong in Ontario, where many a township and village founded by the exiled Loyalists from the United States bore the names of members of the reigning house of Britain; it was scarcely less pronounced in the maritime provinces; and if the French Canadians were naturally less fervent in their attachment,[1] they had, at least, little affection for the republican institutions of the United States. Those whose minds dwell much on the past have long memories; and the inhabitants of Quebec had not forgotten that the country of their fathers was once invaded by the republicans and rebels of New England.

And side by side with this loyalty to Britain—a loyalty which had survived much wild talk before and after the rebellions of 1837 and the agitation of 1849—there was also growing up among Canadians a feeling of loyalty to, and a steadfast belief in, the future of their own country, which was to exert a very appreciable influence on the destinies of British North America. The time had not yet come when a Canada First party could be formed, with the definite aim of encouraging a feeling of Canadian national patriotism; but the unconscious ideal was already beginning to leaven the tone of Canadian politics, and to prepare the soil for the seed of national union.

But the divorce between loyalty and mercantile self-interest did not persist for long. Free trade in Britain had certainly hit colonial commerce hard; but whatever faults

[1] Although it was a celebrated French Canadian, Sir E. P. Taché, a man who took a prominent part in the political life of this period, who was the author of the well-known remark that the last shot for the maintenance of British rule in North America would be fired by a French Canadian. The remark was worthy of one of the most patriotic sons of Quebec; but none the less it is the finest tribute that has ever been made to the justice and generosity of British methods of government. And it is precisely the remark that would never have been made unless it was substantially true.

the British Government may have had, it had not the slightest intention of tyrannising over its colonies again. That lesson it had learned once for all in the Imperial Civil War; and having decided to regulate its home commercial policy, if necessary even at the cost of some disadvantage to the colonies, it soon decided to grant its colonies equal freedom, by allowing them likewise to regulate their own commercial policy, if necessary even at the cost of some disadvantage to the mother country.

Canada is granted Fiscal Freedom, 1847.

The decision was a wise one; but those who introduced the new principle were, perhaps, hardly aware how important a change of policy they had inaugurated, or how far it would be pressed by the rising manufacturing interests of the colonies in later years. The belief was general in England at this time that free trade would soon be adopted by all the world; and any prophet who had foretold that within another half-century British goods would be excluded from British colonies by high tariff walls would have been openly ridiculed to his face.[1]

Yet such was the fact. Even in 1847, but one year after the adoption of free trade by Britain, the first indication was given of a change in Canadian fiscal policy. During that session the Canadian Legislature abolished the preferential duties which had hitherto favoured goods imported from the British Isles; it was enacted that henceforth there should be one uniform duty on all imported goods, whatever their

[1] See, for instance, Earl Grey's outspoken declaration at this time, that when Parliament adopted free trade, 'it did not abdicate the duty and the power of regulating the commercial policy, not only of the United Kingdom, but of the British Empire. The common interest of all parts of that extended empire required that its commercial policy should be the same throughout its numerous dependencies, nor was this less important than before because British policy was now directed to the removal instead of as formerly to the maintenance of artificial restriction upon trade.'

In 1843, too, Charles Buller, who had been associated with Durham in Canada, remarked: 'Of the fiscal policy of the different portions of the empire, you can always make sure, and may rely upon being met by no hostile tariff on their part.'

place of origin. The duties were in many cases increased, in order to provide for a deficit in the revenue; and free trade was rendered possible between all the provinces of British North America.

The abolition of the preference in favour of British goods at once brought many urgent protests from British traders, who now found themselves unexpectedly at a disadvantage in the Canadian market compared with the manufacturers of the United States. American and British goods entered British North America on equal terms as regards the customs; but the cost of transport was less in the case of the American manufacturer, and this natural advantage frequently enabled him to undersell his British rival.[1]

The complaints of the British manufacturers found expression in a protest which the British Government addressed to the Canadians, stating that the new tariff appeared to have been framed in order to protect the interests of Canadian manufacturers, and that 'such a course was injurious alike to the interests of the mother country and to those of the colony.' The remonstrance was not altogether justified, for the tariff was not in fact framed with a view to protecting the Canadian manufacturer; but whether justified or not, the Canadians paid no heed whatever. Britain had adopted free trade because it suited her industrial condition to do so; the Canadians, having been given a free hand in fiscal affairs, had adopted a different policy because that policy suited their less advanced industrial condition. Britain had not considered the loss which she might cause to her colonies when she adopted free trade; Canada in return, did not consider the loss which her own policy might cause to the British. Her position was logically unassailable; and the tariff law of 1847 remained as it had been originally enacted.

[1] The amount of this advantage was estimated by British traders at from 12½ to 15 per cent.—See the memorial submitted by the manufacturers of Sheffield to the Colonial Office, August 1859.

This remonstrance was the first of a series which the British Government addressed to Canada; but in no one case did the subsequent protests obtain a more complaisant answer. The Canadian Ministry took its stand on the firm ground that since Britain had given the colony control of its own fiscal arrangements; since she had also given it full responsible government, the colony was answerable to none but its own people as to the tariffs it imposed.

The colonial position was perhaps most uncompromisingly stated in the Canadian reply to the official British remonstrance of 1859. 'The Government of Canada,' it was laid down in a dispatch from Ottawa, 'acting for its legislature and people, cannot, through those feelings of deference which they owe to the imperial authorities, in any measure waive or diminish the right of the people of Canada to decide for themselves both as to the mode and extent to which taxation shall be imposed. . . . Subject to their duty and allegiance to Her Majesty, the responsibility of the Provincial Ministry must be to the Provincial Parliament, by whose confidence they administer the affairs of the country. And in the imposition of taxation it is so plainly necessary that the administration and the people be in accord, that the former cannot admit responsibility or require approval beyond that of the local legislature. Self-government would be utterly annihilated if the views of the Imperial Government were to be preferred to those of the people of Canada. It is, therefore, the duty of the present Government distinctly to affirm the right of the Canadian Legislature to adjust the taxation of the people in the way they deem best—even if it should unfortunately happen to meet with the disapproval of the Imperial Ministry. Her Majesty cannot be advised to disallow such Acts unless her advisers are prepared to assume the administration of the affairs of the colony, irrespective of the views of its inhabitants.'

Alexander Galt, the minister who was responsible for this

able but unequivocal statement of colonial rights, distinctly denied that the Canadian tariff was protectionist when defending his position before the Imperial Government; but some months earlier he had as distinctly affirmed its protectionist character in the Canadian Legislature—an avowal which was discreetly, if not very honestly, omitted when the speech in question was transmitted to the Colonial Office.[1]

Canada adopts a Protectionist Policy, 1859.

The motive for Galt's prevarication is sufficiently obvious. In the tariff law of 1859 Canada had definitely adopted protection as her fiscal policy; but the colony was not yet very sure of its ground. And the minister who was chiefly responsible for that policy had no desire to enter into a controversy on the subject with the imperial authorities until protection was more firmly established in British North America. For, however the new policy might be justified, it was in principle an extension of the doctrine of responsible government which had never been contemplated in Britain; and the frank avowal that Canada now intended to encourage her own infant industries at the expense of British manufacturers and exporters might have led, and almost certainly would have led, to very strained relations between mother and daughter states. By the simple and well-known expedient of economising the truth, Galt saved the situation, at some little expense to his own reputation for honourable statesmanship.

But had the imperial authorities taken the trouble to inform themselves of the trend of Canadian opinion, they would have seen that for several years past it had set steadily in favour of a measure of colonial protection. The Canadians had never accepted the free-trade doctrines of the new school of political economists in the absolute manner that England had adopted them. They had to raise a large part of their revenue by

[1] This evasion is pointed out in Porritt's *Sixty Years of Protection in Canada.*

import duties; and since there was generally a deficit in the colonial finances, they made it good by increasing the amount of those duties. At first these taxes were not definitely protective in character; but there were signs in plenty that they soon would be.

A free-trade association was formed in Canada, but it never succeeded in acquiring any considerable influence; and as time went on, the tide set strongly in favour of protection. Requests were made that Britain should reverse her fiscal policy; but when these requests failed, the colony gradually moved towards a protective tariff of her own.

The successive stages which led from the mere suggestion of such a step to its actual introduction are easily traced. 'Every encouragement will be given to home manufactures,' said one politician as early as 1845. 'I do not like,' remarked another Canadian two years later, 'to see our hatters importing hats, and shoemakers selling foreign shoes, and tanners offering foreign leather as superior articles. The profits on the manufacture of the goods used by us accumulate in Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Glasgow, Boston, and Pittsburg; to all these places we bear the same relation as the negroes at the Bight of Benin.' And about the same time an inhabitant of Nova Scotia urged that 'it is in vain to suppose that a free-trade system will be beneficial to a new and struggling colony which has nothing to export but raw materials. It is rather calculated to enrich an old commonwealth, whose people by their skill and labour make such raw materials valuable, and then return them for consumption. The result of the system has been that the suppliers of the raw material at last become hewers of wood and drawers of water to the manufacturers.'[1]

Three years later a protectionist tariff was openly advo-

[1] See the *Mirror of Parliament*, 3rd March 1845; Sullivan's *Lecture* to the Mechanics' Institute of Hamilton, 17th November 1847; Gesner, *Industrial Resources of Nova Scotia*.

cated in the Canadian House of Assembly, a motion being brought forward on 28th October 1852 that it was expedient to revise the tariff, ' in order that the revenue derivable therefrom might be raised in such a manner as to foster and encourage those branches of native industry for which this country possesses natural advantages.' The motion was not carried ; but from that time there were continual references to the subject, and the evident prosperity of the United States, which was attributed by some entirely to the protectionist tariff that had been adopted in that country, was a powerful lever in obtaining assent to the proposition that a protectionist policy would be of equal benefit to Canada.

Finally, in the year 1858, Isaac Buchanan, who had never wavered in his opposition to free trade, organised an Association for the Promotion of Industry in order to advocate protection ; and its members soon found that the general feeling of the colony was with them. When that fact was realised at Ottawa, the Canadian Government offered little opposition to the movement. A protectionist tariff was introduced in 1859, and once it was introduced it became a permanent feature of the Canadian fiscal system. The tariff was revised from time to time, but revision was mainly in the direction of increasing the protection afforded to Canadian manufacturers ; and much as the tariff was criticised, no political party in Canada ventured to abolish it in office, however vigorous their denunciations had been in opposition.

Three main complaints were brought against the protectionist system in Canada by its opponents. The first count in the indictment stated that it raised the cost of living by diminishing competition, by giving Canadian manufacturers a practical monopoly of certain goods in the home market, and by increasing the price of imported goods by the amount of the duties levied on them. The second count stated that pro-

Criticism of the Canadian Tariff.

tection brought into a forced and artificial existence certain industries which would otherwise not have obtained a footing at all on Canadian soil; the products of those industries, it was held, cost the Canadian purchaser more than if they had been imported from abroad. The third count in the indictment held that protection introduced corrupt political methods, the government or party in power being bribed by certain manufacturing interests to grant protection to that particular industry in return for large contributions to the secret party funds.

In this indictment the first count was undoubtedly true; the first fifty years that protection was in force in Canada saw a considerable advance in the cost of living, and there was no obvious reason why it should have advanced save for protection.

The second count was true in part. Some of the factories that were established in Canada could never have been founded had they been subject to the free competition of goods imported from abroad; nor could they have continued in existence under this condition even if they could have been founded, since they could not manufacture so cheaply as the larger industrial undertakings in other countries. On the other hand, although many industries were established in Canada under a protectionist tariff that could never have been established under free trade, none were in fact established unless at least some demand for those particular products already existed in the colony. And the contention that goods manufactured in Canada cost the Canadian purchaser more than if they had been imported from abroad was not invariably true; while its force was more than neutralised by the fact that although money came to have a smaller purchasing power in Canada than in England, the workman had considerably greater earning power. The price, both of labour and of goods, was higher in Canada than in England; but except in certain skilled trades, the demand

for which in Canada was not considerable at this time, the workman was in a better position in Canada than in England.

The third count in the indictment, that protection introduced political corruption, had likewise some truth, although its force was greatly exaggerated for partisan purposes. But it is certain that the manufacturer would support those politicians who supported him; it seems probable that this support would easily take the shape of definite financial assistance, given by the manufacturer to the political party which offered in return definite financial assistance in the shape of increased protection for his trade. And intimate transactions of this character are not so far removed from bribery as the purist in politics could desire; nor does it inevitably follow that private interest and the public advantage are always allied.

These objections to the protectionist policy adopted by Canada were by no means without weight, particularly as regards the allegation of political corruption. A nation may conceivably be willing to pay somewhat heavily for the establishment of manufactures on its soil; but it will hardly be willing to pay for the debasement of its politicians and its public affairs.

It is, of course, impossible to say how far the adoption of protection facilitated the spread of political corruption; for the details of such transactions are not proclaimed from the housetops by the parties most intimately concerned. But at least no grave scandal came to light; and the political enemies of those who introduced the protectionist tariff in Canada, and subsequently embodied it in a National Policy, were by no means blind; nor would they have been reticent in proclaiming anything to the discredit of their opponents. And had the same wholesale methods of corruption prevailed in Canada as in the United States at this time, there is little doubt that many specific cases of bribery would have been brought to light.

Yet if the Canadian people paid in one way for the establishment of their manufactures, they gained considerably in another direction. Whatever else might be urged against protection as a national policy, nobody could deny that it stimulated the development, and therefore increased the prosperity of the country enormously. The colonist certainly paid more for his goods when they were manufactured in the colony; but by so doing he drew capital to Canada, he employed Canadian labour, he helped to found considerable towns, and he increased the all-round strength of British North America.

The Case for Protection.

A rigid free-trade policy would have kept Canada absolutely dependent on Britain and the United States for any manufactured goods she required. Even the implements necessary for agricultural purposes would probably have been imported from abroad; but protection gave her the opportunity of utilising her own latent resources, and within a generation freed her from economic dependence elsewhere.

In these early days of Canadian protection, each province made its own tariff, and sometimes penalised goods coming from the neighbouring provinces of British North America. But the existence of these inequalities was in itself an argument in favour of intercolonial free trade; for Canadian statesmen recognised, as Alexander Hamilton had recognised in the infant United States nearly a century before,[1] and as the great German statesmen recognised a few years later, that commercial union was an important, if not an essential feature of national union.

Intercolonial free trade was not yet, indeed, an accomplished

[1] See bk. ix. ch. iv. Unfortunately the adoption by Britain of a purely free-trade policy ruined whatever chance there might have been of establishing a single tariff for the whole empire, such as Disraeli and Chamberlain wished. When that project was discussed in the last decade but one of the nineteenth century, the father of the National Policy in Canada dismissed it as 'an idle dream. No colony would ever surrender its right to control its fiscal policy.'—Pope's *Life of Sir John Macdonald.*

fact, although a single customs union for the whole of British North America was generally admitted to be desirable. Local differences between the maritime provinces and the united colony on the St. Lawrence still hindered agreement in these matters; it was, however, already evident that the problem of fiscal union was hardly one of grave difficulty. This aspect of federation, in fact, presented less danger of a hitch than the purely political side of the question.

Intercolonial Free Trade.

But there were many other internal influences besides the fostering and protection of local industries that led directly towards Canadian union; and there was one mighty influence in particular that changed the whole future of Canada, and to some extent even changed the character of the Canadian nation that was slowly forming during these years. That influence was the great undeveloped territory of the West; a territory which bore much the same overpowering proportion to the settlements already in existence that the dormant regions of the human brain are said to bear to the mental faculties in active daily use.

Other Internal Impulses towards Canadian Union.

Most of the colonists, it is true, concerned themselves little about the West. Their interests were generally confined to their own province; the French Canadian was not familiar even with New Brunswick, the Nova Scotian took little note of events in Ontario; neither French nor English troubled much about the great plains beyond the lakes, where traders and trappers still lived in the wilderness, and where the Hudson's Bay Company still exercised a despotic, if generally benevolent, power over the few settlers and the redskins.

The Canadian West.

Matters had not changed much to all appearance on the western plains during the last fifty years. There were no more conflicts between rival traders since the Hudson's Bay Company and the North-West Company of Montreal had

agreed to bury the hatchet and amalgamate their interests. And there were no more agricultural settlers either in the great West; for the traders and trappers still cherished unquenchable enmity against the farmer. The pioneer Selkirk colony on the Red River could not, indeed, be exterminated; but care was taken that no more experiments of that kind were undertaken in the sacred land of the furrier. No more parties of sturdy immigrants made the toilsome march through the Hudson's Bay Company's territory towards Lake Winnipeg; and all the land that had been granted to Lord Selkirk, except that small portion which was in actual occupation, was bought back by the corporation in 1836 for the low price of £84,000.

Nothing more had since been heard of farms and towns in Rupert's Land. The impression prevailed, and it was not contradicted by the fur-traders, that the West was a vast, bleak territory, almost unfitted for human habitation. And while enormous districts in Ontario were still untouched, and New Brunswick yet remained practically a virgin forest; while, too, communication with, and transport to the West still remained excessively difficult, there was indeed little reason why men should make their homes so far in the wilderness.

But if many years had passed in the West without other change than the fall of the leaf in the silent forests, and the birth of spring from the maternal snows that had cherished the life of the land in secret, there were unmistakable signs of a change in the middle of the nineteenth century. For gold was discovered in California, and an army of miners made their way to the West; in 1858, too, gold was also discovered in British Columbia, and another but smaller army descended further north.

It was now evident that the country beyond the Rocky Mountains would soon be developed; the question remained, By whom? It is true that the Canadian West belonged

to Britain. But California had likewise belonged to Spain. An ambitious neighbour had seized the one; it might also seize the other if the territory were neglected. And that it would be neglected if it remained in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company there was no reason to doubt; for a recent instance showed that the anti-colonising policy of that corporation had not changed for more than a century. Vancouver Island had been granted to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1849 on condition that it was colonised; but some years had elapsed, and no attempt had been made to found a settlement there.[1]

These vast territories of the West were the natural heritage of Canada; but unless Canada entered into possession without delay, there was a danger that the inheritance would pass to others. Yet the people of one province alone could not hope to control the West; a union of all the eastern provinces of British North America was therefore an essential preliminary to the possession of the full heritage of the nascent nation.

External Influences towards Canadian Union.

The fear of American aggression was not ill-founded, as Canada and the other neighbours of the United States had good reason to know. And while the hypothetical danger that the republic would seize the Canadian West could only be realised by a small number of thinking men, there were other menacing indications that brought the danger of Canadian disunion home to the meanest intelligence. Among those indications the weakness of the whole Canadian frontier was the most prominent. Regiments of imperial troops were certainly

[1] When the Hudson's Bay Company was reconstructed in 1863, there were many protestations that a different policy was at last to be adopted; but no change whatever was made, and three years later the shareholders again emphatically rejected the idea of founding settlements in the West. This decision practically decided the Canadian Government's intervention; but the first discussion on the subject of acquiring the North-West Territories had taken place in the Canadian Parliament in 1858, at the time when the discovery of gold in British Columbia forced the question to the front.

quartered in Canada; but the experience of the Crimean War of 1854 and the Indian Mutiny of 1857 showed that those troops might be withdrawn during a grave emergency. At that time, indeed, the Canadians had raised a militia of their own; but the most optimistic could hardly pretend that an untrained militia was capable of taking the place of experienced soldiers if any real fighting was to be done. And although the Canadians were fully entitled to look back with pride to their record in the war of 1812, they could not blink the fact that the United States had advanced enormously in strength since those early days in the history of the two countries.

Point was given to these arguments by certain events which arose out of the Civil War of 1861 in the United States. The Americans were incensed, and not without reason, at the attitude adopted by Britain during that fratricidal struggle; and at one time it even seemed possible that another war might break out between the old empire and the young republic. That disaster to humanity was happily averted; but Canada did not altogether escape the consequence of being the one vulnerable spot of the British Empire in America. When the friction assumed serious proportions, a local militia was raised to defend her interminable frontier against invasion; and the raiding parties of Irish Americans who entered Canada in 1866 found a warmer reception awaiting them than they had bargained for.

The invasion was successfully repelled[1]; but its lesson was not lost on Canada. For although the volunteers from the isolated provinces of British North America could probably have checked any number of sporadic raids, they would have been helpless before a serious invasion by the disciplined

[1] Lord Wolseley, who was in Canada at the time, gives it as his opinion that the whole affair was extremely badly managed on both sides. 'As a military enterprise the invasion was idiotic'; and the defence was in the hands of incompetent officers.—Wolseley's *Story of a Soldier's Life*.

troops of a regular army; and if Britain had gone to war with the United States—which at that time seemed by no means unlikely—the whole American army would certainly have crossed the Canadian frontier in force. Only by means of a union of all the colonies and the creation of some kind of standard colonial army could they hope to render themselves secure against their greater neighbours.

This warning of Canadian weakness had recently been reinforced by a fiscal rebuff from the same quarter. A treaty of commerce had been concluded in 1854 between Canada and the United States for a term of years. Both parties appear to have derived considerable benefits from that measure[1]; but the treaty expired in 1866, and the United States had given notice that they did not intend to renew it. It was already evident that in her commercial relations with her neighbour, as in those with Britain, Canada must rely on her own resources; it was now also seen that she would be better able to defend herself, in a commercial as well as a military sense, if all the provinces spoke with one voice.

The Final Impulse. Political Deadlock in Canada.

The final impulse, however, towards the union of British North America was internal. A serious deadlock occurred in the Canadian Legislature after 1861; and repeated elections did not suffice to remove it. Government and Opposition parties were almost equal in strength; and they seemed likely to remain so. The Government could carry no measures which the Opposition chose to oppose, and they opposed every one; the Opposition could not assume office with any better prospect of success,[2] and both parties professed their undying

[1] The quarrel, which followed the denunciation of the treaty, was the occasion for heated recriminations. As is usual in such disputes, each party accused the other of deriving the greater benefit from the traffic; but the question is no longer of practical importance, and I see no advantage in pulling these old scars open again.

[2] The leader of the Opposition, George Brown, had already tasted the bitter-sweet of leading a minority ministry. He was Prime Minister in 1858—for two days.

hatred and contempt for each other, after the usual manner of political opponents.[1]

But happily even the most extreme of party politicians generally retain some of the elementary instincts of reasonable human beings. When public opinion is so evenly divided that neither side can triumph over its opponents, there are legitimate grounds for believing that the public interest requires a compromise rather than a conflict, and for calling a temporary truce; a conference between the implacable foes may discover some points of agreement that have hitherto been ignored or despised; and in most political arguments that do not go to the roots of human society, an arrangement can be effected which secures substantial justice to the disputants, provided that the disputants themselves are not unwilling to agree.

The Coalition Government, 1864.

Such was in effect the course of events in Canada when the political deadlock became serious in the year 1864. John Alexander Macdonald and George Brown, the two men who were commonly recognised as leaders of the two parties in the province, were wise and patriotic enough to lay aside their differences for the time; a coalition government in which these two were the leading figures was formed to carry over the immediate difficulty; and the larger question of a union of the whole of British North America soon superseded the smaller question of party and parliamentary reform in the United Province of Canada.

Apart from the political passions of the hour, the moment was not, in fact, unpropitious for the discussion. Two of the

[1] I am assured that a glance through the old files of the Toronto *Globe*, a journal founded by George Brown, would have made the editor of the *Eatanswill Gazette* blush for shame at the absurd moderation of his language. The few examples that I have seen of its literary style during this period are certainly very choice and highly-flavoured efforts in the art of vituperation; but they do not surpass the best traditions of the British Press in the heat of a general election. And after all it was an English politician who admitted, during the hearing of a libel case, that it was customary to impute dishonesty to one's political opponents. (Griffiths and Bedell *v.* Benn, November 1910.)

three great questions which had long troubled the province of Canada had been settled by a similar coalition ten years previously; the clergy reserves of Ontario and the rights of the *seigneurs* in Quebec—both political plants of the old world which had proved unsuited to the different soil of the new—had been abolished in 1854. There remained the question of parliamentary reform, and the proportionate influence which French and English Canadians should exercise in the colony; and beyond this internal dispute—for the electoral system of Ontario and Quebec was no direct concern of any other British colony—there was the great problem of colonial union. Upon the solution of that problem, the importance of which had been emphasised by so many warnings, internal and external, in recent years, depended the whole future of British North America.

The two men who took the lead in the discussion were not unworthy the occasion. Both were derived from the Scottish stock that has done so much for Canada; both had obtained power and influence through their own labours; both were strong partisans, who laid aside the claims of party at the critical hour when partisan methods had failed.

John A. Macdonald, 1815-91.

The most prominent and the greater of the two men was John A. Macdonald, the master-builder of the Canadian confederation. His forbears had been traders of some local reputation at Dornoch, an ancient city in the Highlands of Scotland; but the future Prime Minister of Canada was born at Glasgow on 11th January 1815. Five years later, during the dreary period of industrial depression that followed the close of the Napoleonic wars, the whole family emigrated to Ontario in the hope of better fortune. But young Macdonald's father appears to have possessed little of the proverbial ability of his countrymen; he was as incapable of success in the new land as in the old. His two enterprises, a shop at Adolphustown and a grist-mill in another district, both

failed; and whether the difficulties which he could not surmount preyed upon his mind or not, he fell into weak health, and died in 1841.

The younger John Macdonald, like many another man who has impressed his personality strongly upon the world, inherited his sterling qualities from his mother, whose unfailing care in these early years of misfortune he repaid with a close affection that ceased not even at her death; for when his own time came to obey the last summons, it was found that Macdonald had given directions that he should be buried by her side in the cemetery at Kingston, 'as I promised her.'

Happily the mother had lived long enough to see her son's success after his early struggles; and it was a source of legitimate pride to the old lady that the boy who had often had to lend a hand in cooking the family dinner, should rise to the position of Prime Minister. His prospects were not, it must be admitted, encouraging. Such schooling as he got was finished at fifteen; 'I had no boyhood,' he confessed in after years. And instead of going to a university and winning distinction in literature as he had hoped, necessity compelled Macdonald to undertake the less attractive study of the law. But Canada at least has no reason to regret the untoward circumstances which decided his career; for while she may have lost a great man of letters, she gained a statesman who contributed more than any other politician of the age towards the shaping of her destiny on broad national lines within the empire.

The law led in time, as it often does, to politics; but meanwhile Macdonald had shown his mettle in another way. Among those who joined in helping to suppress the rebellion of 1837 was an immature lad of twenty-two, who feared 'he would have dropped under the weight of the old flint musket that galled his shoulder,' had he not been encouraged to keep his place in the ranks by an older, tougher soldier at his side.

The lad was John A. Macdonald; and this early impulse to fight against rebellion and disorder was typical of his future political career.

He possessed no sympathy with schemes of reform that drew any of their inspiration from a merely destructive impulse; he was always a builder, never a wrecker, and to the end of a long life he remained suspicious of those who proclaimed their wish to destroy in order to rebuild. His genius was essentially conservative and constructive; he had the conservative's love of order in the institutions of the state, and of orderly progress in its development; and for that reason he was an uncompromising opponent of those who would have hindered the consolidation of Canadian unity by abolishing the tariff and delaying the construction of railways to join east and west; while for the same reason he threw his whole weight on the side of those who desired to strengthen the connection of Canada with the empire.[1] 'A British subject I was born, a British subject I will die' was his proudest boast; and both Canada and the empire owe an incalculable debt to the poor Scottish immigrant whose handiwork is conspicuous in every detail of the Dominion Constitution, and who was in later years the father of the National Policy, which remained the guiding-star of the country long after his death, and long after the party of which he was the head had been ousted by its opponents.

His advance in the small but troubled political world of the United Provinces was steady. He entered the local parliament in 1844; in 1855 he was a member of the administration;

[1] When the project of imperial federation was being discussed in the last years of Macdonald's life, the very qualified support which he extended to the idea showed distinctly that his innate conservatism contended not unsuccessfully with his innate imperialism. As an imperialist he believed in the closer union of the empire; as a conservative he distrusted the new constitution which imperial federation would have entailed. But one cannot fairly judge a statesman's career by his attitude towards great innovations at seventy years of age; only a Gladstone is ready to head the crusading army on a new campaign.

in another two years he was Prime Minister. And when he headed the coalition government in 1864 he was still in that happy period of life at which the generous ardours of youth are tempered but not chilled by the experience of maturer years, and of an age a man may yet hope that the most fruitful part of his career lies ahead of him.

Macdonald's chief colleague and late opponent in the coalition government, George Brown, was, like himself, of Scottish stock and born in Scotland. Brown's father also, like Macdonald's father, had been unsuccessful in his business affairs; and like Macdonald's father again, he had sought his fortune in America.

George Brown, 1818-80.

But there the resemblance between the circumstances of the two men, who were for many years the leading political figures in Ontario, ends. The rest is a story of dissimilarity and life-long enmity. During the whole of their political careers they were in sharp antagonism to each other, save during the few short months when they sank their differences in the coalition government; and the antagonism was personal as well as political. Brown abused Macdonald in the Press and in Parliament; Macdonald, in revenge, accused Brown of corrupt methods. The charge was proved to be baseless, but that was of small importance during these days of angry rivalry, when men sometimes went about in fear of physical violence from their opponents; and it served Macdonald's turn for the time.

Macdonald was accused by his enemies of being an opportunist; Brown was denounced by his as an extremist. Neither charge was altogether baseless or altogether true; but there was sufficient foundation for both to make them sting. And Brown hit, and hit hard, in the Toronto *Globe*, the newspaper which he founded in 1844, and which he soon raised by sheer journalistic ability to the foremost place in the province of Ontario. As a liberal of the magnificent British school that denounced oppression wherever it was

found, he attacked the slave-owners of the United States. As a democrat in a colony that was becoming more democratic every year, he attacked the privileges which the Family Compact of Ontario had arrogated to themselves. As an opponent of any union of church and state, he attacked the system of clergy reserves in Upper Canada. And as a strong Presbyterian, he attacked the French-Canadian Roman Catholics of Lower Canada. His fiery vehemence in the Press, on the platform, and in Parliament, astonished everybody; but it gained him friends as well as enemies, who forgave, or did not perceive, that it led him into errors of judgment which handicapped his career.

Brown's views were not, however, wholly destructive, although he was as ready to destroy as Macdonald to conserve. He was an advocate of the annexation of the North-West Territories; and he was strongly in favour of Canadian union. Like Macdonald, he had leaned at first to legislative union; like him again, a fuller realisation of the essential difficulties of the problem forced him to admit that federation was the only practical policy.

If Brown now put aside his personal inclinations and consented to serve under Macdonald in a coalition government, it showed that his patriotism, which some of his critics had unjustly and ungenerously impugned, was of a pure and noble cast; for not otherwise could he have worked in conjunction with a man whom he detested and who detested him. How great an effort it cost him may be judged from the fact that the two rivals who now became colleagues were not on speaking terms until they joined the same ministry; and on the day that Brown quitted the coalition, in the certainty that federation was assured, they again ceased all personal intercourse.

The coalition ministry began its task with the knowledge that some isolated aspirations after Canadian union had already been expressed in the past. Lord Durham had pro-

posed it more than twenty years before; and if his suggestion seemed at the time to have fallen on rather barren soil, it had not been altogether fruitless. Those who had promoted the abortive annexation movement of 1849 had felt bound to refer to it as one among the various remedies put forward for the evils that troubled the colonies; but their manifesto dismissed its advantages as problematical at the best, and on commercial grounds it was declared that federal union was 'no remedy.' Their opinion, however, was by no means universally accepted, and in the same year that the annexation movement reached its climax a North American League was founded to promote the idea of colonial union; while ten years later union was mentioned as a proper subject for the consideration of Parliament, in the speech from the throne of the Legislative Assembly of the United Province of Upper and Lower Canada. There can be no doubt that during those ten years —ten eventful years which had seen the failure of the annexationists, and the quickening touch of imperialism in the military assistance rendered by Canada to Britain during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny—the idea of a union of British North America had made considerable progress.

Earlier Aspirations after Union.

The two Canadian leaders were avowed supporters of union. Macdonald, the real head of the ministry at that time, was known to be favourable to the idea; and a convention of the Opposition which was held in Toronto in 1859, and at which George Brown had been present, also declared for union, albeit on somewhat different lines.

The task of the Coalition Government was therefore simplified in some degree through these earlier declarations; and the Coalition was in an overwhelmingly strong position owing to the temporary cessation of party warfare. It is true that public opinion was not noticeably in favour of union. But neither was it strongly opposed to the idea: there was certainly none of

Negotiations for Union, 1864-6.

that extraordinary enmity which had marked the older British colonies in America when similar proposals had been made to them a century earlier.[1] And both political parties were committed through their leaders to a measure of closer union; both parties were also willing to delegate the settlement of details to their leaders, instead of making the problem a matter of platform invective and mutual recrimination in the constituencies. The latter course, had it been pursued, would almost certainly have ended in complete failure.[2]

Union or Federation?

But the six politicians who discussed the question of Canadian union in 1864 were, in fact, separated from each other by considerable divergences of opinion; and those divergences could only be surmounted by compromise.

Macdonald, for instance, who had openly advocated union since 1858, was strongly in favour of a complete legislative union, similar to that which obtained in Britain, as opposed to the looser tie of federation which had been adopted by the republican neighbours of Canada. Nor was he without good reasons for his preference of the British over the American political model. The weakness of the federal system, even at its best, had been strikingly shown by the recent attempted secession of the south from the north in the United States in 1861. The republic had certainly survived the ordeal triumphantly; but it had survived it only at the cost of a terrible civil war. And other signs of the weakness inseparable from the loose American form of federation had long been

[1] External dangers often compel internal unity; but the menace of French aggression in the old English colonies on the Atlantic seaboard was certainly not less urgent in the eighteenth century than the menace of American aggression on Canada in the nineteenth. Yet the American colonies would hear nothing of union, and only accepted it grudgingly after they had secured their independence and the French Empire had fallen.

[2] Even the most democratic communities generally find it better to discuss the graver constitutional problems of the state in secret committee, rather than to trust to the popular voice. The details of the constitutions of the United States, Canada, Australia, and South Africa were all settled at private conferences.

evident to close students of politics in the United States. The divergence of laws between state and state, and the recurrent 'state rights' controversy between the local states and the central federal authority, were political dangers which any nation would do well to avoid. Macdonald therefore argued with unanswerable force that 'if we could agree to have one government and one parliament, legislating for the whole of these peoples, it would be the best, the cheapest, the most vigorous, and the strongest system of government we could adopt.'

But a complete union of this kind, although ideally no doubt the best, was recognised by those familiar with Canadian politics to be impossible for British North America; and by none was its impossibility more frankly recognised than by Macdonald himself. A legislative union would have altogether swamped the French Canadians in Quebec, who were already outnumbered by the British Canadians in Ontario; for when the representatives from the maritime provinces, which were purely British in population, had been added to the representatives from Ontario, the French would have been outvoted on every occasion. And the large party of ultra-Protestants in Ontario, who had formed strong societies of Orangemen after the fashion of the Irishmen in Ulster, would have been anything but tolerant of the Roman Catholics of Quebec; while the French Canadians, who had never ceased to protest against the doctrine which Lord Durham had put forward, that their nationality should be extinguished by the creation of a British majority, would have felt themselves betrayed by such a union, and have formed themselves into a solid, sullen, and permanently obstructive party.

Yet however the question of Canadian union was decided, no scheme that aspired to be a permanent and satisfactory settlement could ignore the existence of Quebec; nor would Macdonald, who had always worked amicably with his French neighbours and French colleagues in the ministry, have been

guilty of the attempt. For that reason, if for no other, it was necessary to abandon the idea of a legislative union; and the coalition therefore fell back upon the federal scheme.

But here again Canada had the advantage of framing her constitution eighty years later than the United States, and with the consequent opportunity of avoiding the weak parts of the republican system. In the American system the local states were too powerful, and the central federal government was not powerful enough; in the Canadian system, as it was evolved during these months of discussion, care was taken that the balance should be fully redressed. So far as men can control the future, the builders of Canadian union endeavoured to secure that the centre of political gravity should lie in the federal government, and not in the provincial units; and that in any conflict between the two rival authorities the federal government should always prevail.

But another difficulty soon presented itself with regard to the position of the French Canadians within the union. George Brown and the reform party which he led had always advocated the system of representation by population, and this had proved a popular battle-cry among the English-speaking section of the United Provinces at several recent elections. It was impossible to deny the justice of that cry in a democratic country, for the English-speaking majority was under-represented in the Legislative Assembly in proportion to the French. But it was equally impossible to admit it with any regard to the feelings of the French-Canadian people. For the latter were in a minority in the United Provinces, and that part of Durham's scheme which had calculated on their being in a permanent minority in the legislature had not worked well. It had led in practice to the ever-present difficulty that the ministry was forced to command a majority of both French and British constituencies, and that the Cabinet was composed of French and British

representatives—a system which did not facilitate the conduct of public business; and any redistribution of seats would materially have enhanced the British advantage over the French.

The evil consequences that such a redistribution would have had in embittering the feelings of the French Canadians could not be ignored by practical statesmen, who recognised that French and British had to live together in Canada for all time. But there was one satisfactory solution of this second difficulty, and this was determined on as the only possible way out of the threatened deadlock between the interests of Ontario and Quebec.

Ontario was wholly British in population; Quebec was almost wholly French. The two provinces had originally been separated; they were united by Lord Durham. They must now be separated again; and by this expedient the French would be masters in their own house in Quebec, while the British would be masters in Ontario. In the important sphere of provincial politics, therefore, neither nationality would jar upon the other; in the common federal politics which concerned them both, a method as excellent as it was simple was devised in order to lessen racial jealousies.

The French Canadians were a settled community, whose regular increase of numbers year by year owed nothing to the artificial increase by immigration; the British, on the other hand, increased their numbers considerably by immigration, and they also lost something of that increase through the leakage of settlers across the American frontier. It was therefore evident that the British population was altogether less stable and permanent in character than the French; and it was agreed that the French-Canadian population should be the unit of representation in the federal parliament. Quebec was always to send sixty-five members to Ottawa; the other provinces were to elect as many members in pro-

portion to their population as these sixty-five were to the population of Quebec.

Representation by population was thus secured, as the English colonists desired; but it was secured without any injustice to the French, who could always be certain of controlling a large party in the federal parliament. No better example could be given of the spirit in which the coalition ministry laboured to secure a successful issue of the knotty racial problem.

The Maritime Provinces and Union.

While these deliberations were in progress in the United Provinces, a conference of a similar character was being held at Charlottetown in Prince Edward Island, between representatives of the three maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, to discuss the question, which had been brought forward by Nova Scotia in 1861, of uniting these three provinces under one government and one legislature. Their general interests were so closely allied, their population was so similar in character, and their local differences so difficult to define, that the Charlottetown conference was hardly likely to fail in its work; but before its sessions were concluded the Canadian coalition ministry sent its own delegates thither to urge the consideration of the larger question of a union of the whole of British North America.

So thoroughly did they accomplish their task, so attractive did the greater union appear to the Charlottetown conference, and so clearly, in the opinion of the representatives of the maritime provinces, did the Canadian delegates show the advantages, material and otherwise, of the greater union over the lesser, that the project of a maritime league was abandoned in order, as Macdonald stated, that the three provinces of the Atlantic seaboard might 'join heart and hand with us in entering into the larger scheme, and trying to form, as far as they and we could, a great nation and a strong government.' The course of subsequent events made it

clear that in thus accepting the larger policy the Charlottetown conference was going somewhat in advance of public opinion in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island ; but there was no serious indication of any revulsion of local feeling at the time, and it was agreed to hold a general conference between all the provinces at Quebec later in the year.

The Quebec Conference, 1864.

On 10th October 1864, the general conference, which was to decide the whole question, accordingly began its deliberations in the city whose foundations Samuel Champlain had laid two and a half centuries before. Quebec was still the capital of a French province, as Champlain had intended it to be ; but the larger plan which he had formed of a French Empire in North America, had vanished for ever in the smoke of Wolfe's guns a hundred and five years earlier.

The country in whose exploration Champlain had taken so considerable a part still cherished the memory of the great pioneer ; but the Canada which was now met together to discuss the union of its provinces was mainly British in population. Representatives were present from the United Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, from the three maritime provinces, and from Newfoundland ; and of these only the representatives of Lower Canada were French. Possibly some of the members of the conference that was now attempting to determine, so far as lay within its power, the future political destinies of Canada, pondered the old warnings of prophets and poets of bygone empires as to the transitory nature of all human institutions ; and as they watched, from the windows of the chamber in which the conference was held, the great river that opened up the heart of Canada flowing past the massive rocks on which Quebec was built, as it had flowed for ages before white man or redskin had disputed the soil of the West, some may, perhaps, have wondered whether they and all their aims were not the shadows, and the dumb rocks and silent streams the substance,

of a world not understood. A disconnected series of accidental circumstances had had more influence on the shaping of Canadian union under British rule than the guiding hand of any statesman; it might fall out that another series of events in another generation would sweep away the edifice that was now being laboriously constructed, leaving but a casual stone here or a broken arch there to mark the period of British rule in the upper half of North America.

Whatever thoughts may have passed through the minds of the delegates to the conference, the result of their deliberations showed no sign of feeble or divided counsels. The discussions were held in private, and no report of the proceedings was published; but no serious disagreements divided the assembly. The work was quickly but efficiently done: for between 10th and 28th October no fewer than seventy-two resolutions were passed, which were taken as the basis of the terms of union; and these resolutions were subsequently discussed by each of the provincial assemblies.

The federal system adopted by the conference was approved by the United Provinces of Canada, by Nova Scotia, and by New Brunswick; but in two provinces the scheme was rejected. The Newfoundland Legislature decided that it was 'not expedient to enter upon its discussion with a view to any decision'; and neither then nor subsequently did the oldest of the British North American colonies abandon its isolation.

Prince Edward Island also rejected the scheme for a time. The curious may discover in this reluctance on the part of the two islands to enter the union a proof of insularity of spirit, in contrast to the prompt acceptance of the principle of unity by the people of the continental provinces; but other causes helped to influence the decision of Prince Edward Island,[1] and its attitude of independence was soon abandoned.

The defection of these two provinces was a disappointment;

[1] See ch. ii. of this book.

but the remaining three did not on that account abandon the project; nor were the advocates of federation prepared to wait for a change of public opinion in the two dissentient islands.

The whole scheme was now brought before the imperial authorities; and in December 1866 delegates from Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia met in London to discuss the question with the British Government. The latter proved warmly sympathetic, and the Act for the union of British North America was introduced in the Imperial Parliament on 7th February 1867. Four weeks later, on 8th March, it passed both Houses; and on 1st June 1867, the Dominion of Canada came into existence.

The British North America Act, 1867.

The preamble of the British North America Act declared that the constitution adopted by Canada was to be 'similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom.' The political character of the new Dominion was therefore definitely fixed on a monarchical basis, not cast in the republican mould that the other great English-speaking community in America had adopted eighty years before; and this important step was of necessity taken advisedly, and after close observation of the disadvantages which experience showed were attached to the republican system of federal government.[1]

The monarchical system had never lost its popularity in Canada, where the United Empire Loyalists had always cherished a feeling of strong personal attachment to the throne of Britain, and where the map of Ontario bore the visible mark of their loyalty in the names of its towns and villages; while the republican theory had never thriven in any of the

[1] Macdonald's criticism of the President of the United States was as acute as most of his political judgments. 'By the election of a President by a majority and for a short period, he never is the sovereign and chief of the nation. He is never looked up to by the whole people as the head and front of the nation. He is at best but the successful leader of a party.'

Canadian provinces, where it had at most been an exotic plant imported by some few admirers of the United States. So decided, in fact, was Canadian opinion on this point that Macdonald could claim 'the universal approval of the people' for the resolution which 'provided that for all time to come, so far as we can legislate for the future, we shall have as the head of the executive power the sovereign of Great Britain.'

Some of the Loyalists, and Macdonald among them, would indeed have gone a step further even than this, for they wished to proclaim Canada a kingdom under the King of England. But the Imperial Government feared that the term would raise the stern republican wrath of the United States; and the suggestion, which if adopted would probably have been imitated by Australia and South Africa at a later date, was rather unfortunately negatived.

Canada was therefore proclaimed a British Dominion, comprising a federal union of the provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick; power was also given to admit the remaining provinces of British North America at any subsequent date.

The Dominion was to be ruled by a Governor-General, who was appointed by the Crown as its direct representative. He was charged with the duty of appointing Lieutenant-Governors of the various provinces under him; but such appointments were to be made by the Governor-General in Council; in other words, by and in accordance with the advice of his ministers.

The Governor-General was to be advised and aided by a Privy Council of thirteen members, whose number was subsequently increased to fourteen; this council was composed of the members of the Dominion Government, who were bound to have a parliamentary majority in the Dominion Legislature.

The Dominion Parliament was composed of two chambers—a Senate and a House of Commons.

The Senate consisted originally of seventy-two members, twenty-four each for Quebec, Ontario, and the maritime provinces; British Columbia, Manitoba, and Prince Edward Island each sent another two senators on their subsequent admission to the union a few years later.[1] The senators were nominated for life; a property qualification of four thousand dollars was adopted, and it was also enacted that every senator should be not less than thirty years of age.

The Canadian Senate.

It was the intention of the framers of the Constitution to make the Senate as nearly as possible a replica of the British House of Lords, a body for which Macdonald had as great an admiration as Alexander Hamilton. But an exact replica of that unique institution, whose privileges, indeed, were already being attacked in Britain by the more democratic politicians of the Victorian age, was out of the question in Canada. The colony had no hereditary landed aristocracy to maintain the tradition of stable family descent and influence from one generation to another; her people were mainly democratic farmers, whose tie to their possessions was as yet solely one of self-interest, hardly ever one of sentiment. There were more opportunities of rising in life, as also perhaps of falling, in Canada than in England; and no such extreme differences of worldly position existed. There was no wealthy peer or rich manufacturer at one end of the scale of comfort, and agricultural labourer or mill-hand at the other; neither could there on that account be any such sharp social distinctions in the colony as prevailed in the older country. Indeed, exceptional privileges of all kinds were contrary to the general tone of the community, as the abolition of the clergy reserves in Ontario and the rights of the *seigneurs* in Quebec had demonstrated only a few years back.

It would have been easy, it is true, to have created an

[1] Provision was also made for Newfoundland to send four members to the Senate whenever it joined the union.

imitation House of Lords for the new Dominion, and to have endowed it with all the constitutional powers of its prototype. But the mere words of the Act which created it would have effected nothing when the whole atmosphere in which such an institution could have existed was lacking. Nothing could have given a Canadian House of Lords the inherited influence, deep-rooted in the traditions of the past, which belonged to the elder body in Britain; not even a long and active manifestation of statesmanlike qualities could have won it the respect of the Canadian people. For its very existence would have been an absurd anomaly in British North America; its sham aristocracy would have seemed as tawdry and ridiculous as the properties of the theatrical stage when exposed to the open air; and inextinguishable laughter would have greeted the appearance of the first peers of Quebec and Ontario who took their oaths at Ottawa.

It was not difficult for practical statesmen to foresee that an hereditary Upper House was impossible in a young democratic country. But none of those who took part in drafting the Canadian Constitution were prepared to support single-chamber government; and a Senate was therefore devised, as in the United States, to take the place of the British House of Lords.

But there was a general disinclination to adopt the system of election to the Senate which prevailed under the American Constitution; for it was perceived that the elective system had not in practice fully answered the expectations of those who had devised it. The nomination of senators by the Crown was therefore adopted in Canada as the course most in accordance with the British Constitution; and as it also seemed likely that a nominated Senate would be more independent of sudden and temporary changes in popular feeling than an elected body, and would on that account be more conservative, the system of nomination was heartily supported by Macdonald.

Some fears were expressed lest the Canadian Senate might not in time become too powerful; and it was thought that, as the numbers of the senators were limited, and no new senators could be created by the prerogative of the Crown in the case of a deadlock between the two Houses, the Upper House might show itself altogether independent of the Sovereign, the Lower House, and the advisers of the Crown. Macdonald expressed himself confident that no such result would occur; but he hardly anticipated that the Senate would prove the least effective part of the Dominion Constitution, and that the nominated senators of Canada would exercise far less real power than the elected senators of the United States. Yet the next few years showed that such was the case.

The Canadian House of Commons resembled its British counterpart more closely than the Senate resembled the House of Lords, although the Canadian members received a salary for their services, as in the United States. Their position and privileges were practically the same in each country.

The House of Commons.

The first Canadian House of Commons consisted of 181 members, of whom 65 were elected by Quebec, 82 by Ontario, 19 by Nova Scotia, and 16 by New Brunswick. Four years later the number was increased to 206 on the admission of other provinces to the union; and as the population of the country grew, revision became necessary from time to time.

No uniform franchise was introduced until 1885; but there was a readjustment of representation after the census of 1871, and again in 1881; in 1886 representation was granted to the North-West provinces.

The Dominion parliaments were to be quinquennial; the British Constitution was taken as the model for the executive, and the British system of general elections was adopted instead of the American method of annually re-electing a portion of the House.

The provincial legislatures continued as of old, but with restricted powers and diminished prestige. It was the deliberate policy of those who drew up the Constitution to increase the power of the whole Dominion at the expense of its several provinces; and this was one of the most important points in which the Canadian Constitution differed from the American. Macdonald and his colleagues wished at all costs to avoid the 'state rights' agitation which had so often troubled their republican neighbours; and the recent civil war in America, which had arisen out of the question of the right of a state to quit the federal union, made them the more careful to hedge the powers of the Canadian provinces with restrictions, so that all possibility of the occurrence of such an event should be removed from the future of the Dominion.

The Provincial Legislatures.

It was laid down that the jurisdiction of the Dominion included the control of the public debt, public expenditure, and public loans; the laying of customs and excise duties; the regulation of trade, commerce, navigation, shipping, and fisheries, lighthouses and harbours, public works, railways, and canals; the naval, military, and postal services; regulations as to money, banks, currency, coining, and bankruptcy; the control of the criminal law, marriage, and divorce; and all other matters that were not specifically reserved for the provincial governments.

The provincial governments, on the other hand, controlled legislation concerning provincial property and civil rights, provincial lands, the borrowing of money for provincial purposes, direct provincial taxation, the upkeep of public institutions, the issue of tavern licences, the incorporation of provincial companies, and the formalities for the solemnisation of matrimony.

The powers of the provincial governments were strictly confined to provincial matters in sharp contrast to the United States, where all questions not specifically reserved

for the federal authority devolved on the individual states; but there was another remarkable innovation in the Dominion Constitution which limited the powers of the provinces still further.

The functions of the Governor-General were more limited than those of the President of the United States; but he appointed judges as well as the Lieutenant-Governors of provinces; and he possessed one peculiar prerogative, hitherto unknown to the British Constitution. The Governor-General could reserve Acts of the Dominion Parliament for the consent of the imperial authorities; but he could veto any Act of any of the provincial legislatures on the advice of his council, and without consulting the Crown. The effect of this proviso was tantamount to giving the federal Dominion Government an absolute veto over all provincial legislation whatever. This was the keystone in the bridge of supremacy which the federal authority built over the provincial units; and although much local irritation was caused when the power was exercised in Manitoba, over the question of provincial railway projects and the prior rights of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and elsewhere, the authority of the central power was not successfully disputed.[1]

It was left to the discretion of the several provinces whether they adopted single- or double-chamber government. Experience showed that the bi-cameral system was expensive and

[1] A considerable amount of correspondence took place over this question, which those who have a taste for such light literature can peruse in the thousand odd pages of *Imperial Supervision Over Canadian Legislature*. The following letter from the Privy Council, dated 13th December 1872, sums up the position. 'It appears that as the power of confirming or disallowing Provincial Acts is vested by statute in the Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada, acting under the advice of his constitutional advisers, there is nothing in this case which gives to Her Majesty in Council any jurisdiction over this question, though it is conceivable that the effect and validity of this Act may, at some future time, be brought before Her Majesty, on an Appeal from the Canadian Courts of Justice.' The particular Act which gives rise to this dispute was, as might be guessed, one dealing with education—a topic that has given rise to more unprofitable controversy, both in Canada and in England, than any other.

unnecessary in the local legislatures; and Manitoba, which began its political career with two Houses, subsequently abolished its second chamber, while both Ontario and British Columbia found one sufficient.

The Constitution could not be amended save with the consent of the Imperial Parliament. An appeal was allowed to the British Privy Council in disputed points; but the establishment of a Supreme Court in Canada in 1875 on the model of, but with less power than that of the United States, lessened, although it did not abolish the necessity of appealing to the supreme legal tribunal of the Empire.

Amendment of the Constitution.

Subject to this, and to the fact that it could not declare war or negotiate treaties with foreign states, the Dominion possessed the same powers as an independent state, while it was at the same time assured of protection from the attacks of its enemies by the imperial army and navy.[1]

No great constructive work of statesmanship is ever accomplished without friction; and the friction does not often cease with the inauguration of the new era. Those who have been overborne in the main struggle are sometimes able to concentrate their efforts successfully in concerted attacks on a single issue; and in the attempt to create a new nation out of jarring provinces, a backwash of provincialism and local jealousies may cause serious embarrassment at times, and perhaps even jeopardise the national union itself.

The Backwash of Provincialism.

The Canadian union, it is true, was hardly ever in serious danger after confederation had been accomplished; the difficulties which faced the statesmen of the new Dominion were far fewer, and they were far less grave, than those

[1] On the other hand Canada had, of course, to face the chance that in the event of Britain being at war, her American territories might be invaded. The question was thoroughly considered by Canadian statesmen, who came to the conclusion that the risk of the Dominion being involved in a quarrel not her own was small.

which had made the first years of the United States so critical. But nevertheless there was a perceptible backwash of provincial feeling, particularly in Nova Scotia, where the anti-federal feeling was for some time extremely antagonistic to Canada; and elsewhere there were occasional signs of tension, and a straining at the rivets and joints of the federal machine, which furnished evidence of sectional agitation against the working of the British North America Act.

The larger destiny that awaited Canada as a whole necessarily detracted something from the importance of any individual province of the union; but the larger destiny prevailed.

Its Failure.

The new federation might, in fact, have been compared to a new house which had to settle firmly on its foundations before the architects, who had planned a difficult structure, could receive their due meed of praise. Some of the timber employed in the work started and warped a little at first. A crack or two appeared in the surface of the inner walls; and once or twice, when the provinces agitated against the superior powers of the central federal authority, there was some grumbling among the inmates that the rooms were not larger and the building itself smaller. But these things passed; and time proved that the new house was solidly and squarely built. It did more; for it showed that the new house could be enlarged by the addition of wings on either side.

At the eastern angle of the Dominion, Prince Edward Island repented of its isolation, and joined the federation in 1873. At the western angle the North-West Territories and Rupert's Land had already been added in 1870; while still more to the west, the new province of British Columbia joined the union on 31st March 1871.

The framework of the new nation was complete from Atlantic to Pacific; and the new nation was born on the day when the scattered provinces laid aside their old differences

and coalesced into one Dominion. Canada had yet to pass through the various troubles of infancy and childhood, to gain strength from the growth of her members, to develop a national soul that would animate that gigantic body from end to end; but these matters were the inevitable slow fruition of many years. The New Nation.

It was enough for one generation that it had assisted at the birth of the new nation, and that that nation was born within and not without the empire, as the legitimate daughter of Britain; for the creation of the Dominion of Canada was the triumphant answer of the nineteenth century to the split of empire in the eighteenth, and the proof that the terrible warning of the Imperial Civil War had not been given in vain.

END OF VOLUME THE THIRD

Printed by T. and A. Constable, Printers to His Majesty
at the Edinburgh University Press

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 10019 367 9